MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

MAY 2007 ISSUE # 288
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CLOCKCLEANER

PLUS: Conflict(US), Pisschrist, The Rats(Sweden), Viletones, Violent Tumor

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
#153, 156 pts. 1 & 2, 161, 174-175, 179-181, 184, 186-202, 204, 206-210, 214-215, 218, 221-225, 227, 229-236, 238-287

See page 4 for pricing and other info.

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TOP 10

For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

TIM BROOKS

BURNING THE PROSPECT/SILENCE-split EP	BRUTAL KNIGHTS-Feast Of Shame-LP
WAR ALL THE TIME/WHOLE IN THE HEAD-split EP	TOTALITÄR-Vi Är Eliten-LP+EP
CROW-s/t 12"	NITAD-Utboling På Livstid-EP
SEX/VID-Tania-EP	THE SUBHUMANS-LP
KIELTOLAKI-Totaalisen Tuhon Huominen-EP	GASMASK TERRÖR-LP

MITCH CARDWELL

THE TOUCH-ME-NOTS-It's Not Right But It's Okay-EP	V/A-Choke On It-LP
RED RED RED-Mind Destroyer-LP	THE CARPETTES-Small Wonder/2ne1-45
THE SPITS-2006 European Tour-LP	THE BLANKS-7"
SLOWMOTIONS-Dial Eleven-LP	LAMPS-live
V/A-DC Demos-LP	DINKY BITS & THE LIL GUYS-live

ROB COONS

SEX/VID-Tania-EP	REAGAN SS-Bon Apetit!-EP
KIELTOLAKI-Totaalisen Tuhon Huominen-EP	THE SPITS-2006 European Tour-LP
TOTALITÄR-Vi Är Eliten-LP+EP	GASMASK TERRÖR-LP
SLOWMOTIONS-Dial Eleven-LP	LAST RIGHTS-No Guts, No Glory-LP
DESTRUCKTIONS-Complete Destrucktions-LP	MODERAT LIKVIDATION-Never Mind the Bootlegs...-CD

PAUL CURRAN

HANGIN' WITH THE CRUSTIES

JONATHAN FLOYD

BRUTAL KNIGHTS-Feast Of Shame-LP	CITIZEN FISH/LEFTOVER CRACK-Deadline-CD
SEX/VID-Tania-EP	TOTALITÄR-Vi Är Eliten-LP+EP
POTBOILER-56th & Grove/Self Pity for Dummies-45	THE ASSASSINATORS-Torste Dag I Resten Af Mit Liv-EP
THE TOUCH-ME-NOTS-EP	SPARKLE MOTION-CD
THE YOUNG OFFENDERS-45	THIS IS MY FIST-live

LAYLA GIBBON

V/A-DC Demos-LP	LAST RIGHTS-No Guts, No Glory-LP
SEX/VID-Tania-EP	JUMP OFF A BUILDING-Left Out-EP
CLOCKCLEANER-Frogrammer-EP	CONTAMINATORS-No Friends-EP
THEE MIDNITERS-Everybody Needs Somebody To Love-EP	KIELTOLAKI-Totaalisen Tuhon Huominen-EP
NEW BLOODS-A Ritual-EP	CONDENADA-Amor Es Amor-EP

CHRIS HUBBARD

TOTALITÄR-Vi Är Eliten-LP+EP	THE ASSASSINATORS-EP
SEX/VID-Tania-EP	NITAD-Utboling På Livstid-EP
CLOCKCLEANER-Frogrammer-EP	KOLOKOL-Flammer & Farger-LP
JUMP OFF A BUILDING-Left Out-EP	KIELTOLAKI-Totaalisen Tuhon Huominen-EP
CONDENADA-Amor Es Amor-EP	*Mindless Mutant-#2*

KENNY KAOS

THE ROTTEN LEPRECHAUNS-Dr. Gore-10"	THE CATBURGLARS-Holy Shit-EP
ELEKTROLUX / SUBTLE TURNIPS-split EP	THE SPITS-2006 European Tour-LP
BRUTAL KNIGHTS-Feast Of Shame-LP	V/A-DC Demos-LP
BRIMSTONE HOWL-Uptight/The Gates 2-45	THE CREEPY CREEPS-Biffins Bridge-LP
THE TOUCH-ME-NOTS-EP	THE YOUNG OFFENDERS-45

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl or CD-only releases to the address on the previous page. See Demos section for where to send tapes & CD-Rs.

CAROLYN KEDDY

THEE MIDNITERS-EP	THE TOUCH-ME-NOTS-EP / RED RED RED-LP
CONTAMINATORS-No Friends-EP	BRUTAL KNIGHTS-LP / THE CATBURGLARS-EP
BRIMSTONE HOWL-Uptight/The Gates 2-45	*Don't Need You*-film
V/A-Attack of the One-Man Bands!-2xCD	*You're Gonna Miss Me*-film
THE YOUNG OFFENDERS-45 / SEX/VID-EP	ROKY ERICKSON-live

WILL KINSER

TOTALITÄR-Vi Är Eliten-LP+EP	DESTRUCKTIONS-Complete Destrucktions-LP
THE ASSASSINATORS-EP	LAST RIGHTS-LP / ABSURD-Blodig Stad-EP
BOMBEREGN-No Fucking End-EP	DRAFT DODGER-First Past The Last Post-LP
KIELTOLAKI-EP / BRUTAL KNIGHTS-LP	CONDENADA-Amor Es Amor-EP
CROW-s/t 12" / GIUDA-LP	HOLOKAUST-Into the Void of Oblivion-LP

RAY LUJAN

ONLY CRIME-Virulence-CD	POTBOILER-56th and Grove/Self Pity for Dummies-45
THE INDECISION ALARM-CD	THE HEAVY HEARTS-CD / THE SUBHUMANS-LP
THE BECAUSE/ONE REASON-split EP	SMOKE OR FIRE-This Sinking Ship-CD
THE YOUNG OFFENDERS-Trelawny's Army/Angels-45	RETARDED-Goes Louder-CD
THE SPITS-2006 European Tour-LP	ROKY ERICKSON-live

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

PLEASE INFORM THE CAPTAIN THIS IS A HIJACK-LP	THE CARPETTES-Small Wonder/2ne1-45
THE YOUNG OFFENDERS-45	THE BLANKS-Northern Ripper-7"
SEX/VID-EP / REAGAN SS-Bon Apetit!-EP	V/A-DC Demos-LP
WAR ALL THE TIME/WHOLE IN THE HEAD-split EP	SHAM 69-United-2xCD
JUMP OFF A BUILDING-EP / CONDENADA-EP	STAJNAS LOBOS/VACANT CHURCHES-split EP

GOLNAR NIKPOUR

SEX/VID-Tania-EP	SLOWMOTIONS-Dial Eleven-LP
TOTALITÄR-Vi Är Eliten-LP+EP	JUMP OFF A BUILDING-Left Out-EP
KIELTOLAKI-Totaalisen Tuhon Huominen-EP	NEW BLOODS-A Ritual-EP
CONDENADA-Amor Es Amor-EP	CLOCKCLEANER-EP / ABSURD-Blodig Stad-EP
THE YOUNG OFFENDERS-45	DESTRUCKTIONS-Complete Destrucktions-LP

BRUCE ROEHRS

KIELTOLAKI-EP / GASMASK TERRÖR-LP	NITAD-Utboling På Livstid-EP
BOMBEREGN-EP / KRUMBUMS-As the Tide Turns-CD	REAGAN SS-EP / TOTALITÄR-LP+EP
RUPTURE/THE NERDS-split CD	NUCLEAR DEATH TERROR-LP / DEADFALL-live
WAR ALL THE TIME/WHOLE IN THE HEAD-split EP	STRONG ARM & THE BULLIES/UNITED-live
YAKUZA HORROR-La VI Extincion-EP	INTREPID FORCES,ROADSIDE BOMBS-live

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

DESTRUCKTIONS-Complete Destrucktions-LP	ABSURD-Blodig Stad-EP
KIELTOLAKI-Totaalisen Tuhon Huominen-EP	GASMASK TERRÖR-LP
SEX/VID-Tania-EP	V/A-DC Demos-LP
JUMP OFF A BUILDING-EP/CONDENADA-EP	THE YOUNG OFFENDERS-45
TOTALITÄR-Vi Är Eliten-LP+EP	CROW-s/t 12"

ZINE TOP TEN

A Beat of Our Own #2	*Hub City Out of the Basement #1*
Brainscan #21	*Hush #1*
Cash Flagg #3	*Mindless Mutant #2*
Death Pangs #666	*The Rise and Fall of the Harbor Area #9*
Distort #3	*What Are you Doing With Your Mom's Sofa?*

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A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES...

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#174/Nov '97. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity. "Education" theme issue.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Umlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, 3rd Party, No Class.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#221/Oct '01. The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11, Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine , Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl, Vrah.

#252/May '04. Fucked Up, Firestarter, Inepsy, Laukaus, Great Clearing Off, Radio Reelers, Extreme Noise Records, 46 Short, The State, John The Baker, Free Verse, Chrystaei Branchaw photos.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. The Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Haro Dishonest, Kickz, The Boss Martians, Reactionary Three, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, The Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/September '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, *Baboon of Sickness* zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, *Trust* fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Part One, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (*Avow* zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Part Two, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

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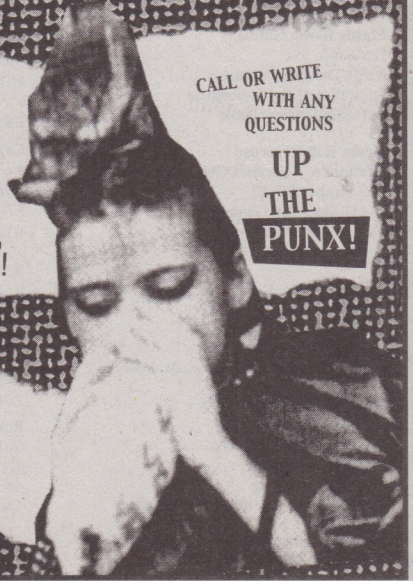

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LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

Dear MRR and to whom this may concern—

I am writing this letter because in the March 2007 issue of this publication, my band, Rabies, and members of my band were accused of being "sketchy and homophobic" by and individual, Zack Howard. I am not going to try to deny the allegations that my band is "sketchy" but I will say that we certainly do not support homophobia. I will not deny or confirm any comments made by members of my band involving the word "faggot." I can only be held accountable for the utterance that I personally have articulated and therefore do not feel it my place to confirm or deny something that may have been said by someone else. However, I think it unlikely. I would also like to address the erroneous accusation that a member of my band referred to ANS's performance of their song Texas Pride as "the gayest thing I have ever seen." I can undoubtedly say that all four members of Rabies believe that ANS are true dudes, who tear it up and are always down to rage. Lastly I would like to raise the issue that THIS IS PUNK ROCK YOU FUCKING PUSSIES! IF YOUR FEELINGS GET HURT BECAUSE A BAND COVERS A VILE SONG OR SOMEONE SAID SOMETHING YOU DON'T LIKE MAYBE YOU SHOULD BE LISTENING TO EMO. HARDCORE ISN'T ABOUT READING MAGAZINES AND COLLECTING RECORDS. IF YOU WANT TO SEE THE REAL DEAL COME TO A RABIES SHOW. In conclusion Rabies rule, ANS rule, Government Warning rule, and VILE RULES.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Sincerely,
—Harley Rabies
P.S. Get bent.

Dear MRR—

As a fan of hardcore punk and liberal politics, as well as this magazine, I am often overwhelmed by the vicious anti-Israeli sentiments of these scenes. After reading the Smartut Kahol Lavan interview in the March issue, a band whom I greatly enjoy listening to and find myself often agreeing with, and after months of reading *MRR*'s profoundly anti-Israel political choir-preaching, I felt as though it was necessary for someone to speak sympathy for a country buried in constant criticism.

In full disclosure, I am an American Jew currently living in Israel. As a kid, I grew up disdainful of religion, Zionism, and was critical of Israel. To this day, even while in Israel, these tenets of my belief have not changed. I am not a spiritual guy, much preferring logic and humanism over religious unquestioning faith. I do not call myself a Zionist because I am uncomfortable with assigning myself with any nation, and I am critical of Israel because Israel has committed acts, largely within the contested territories of the West Bank and Gaza, that deserve to be criticized. However, when in the interview Mr. Gomez of SKL dismissed all Israelis as at best "moderate racists" and indicated the country's troubles weren't as though "everyone is OK but the government sucks," essentially assigning all Israelis the fate of being undeserving of compassion due to their inherently cruel nature, I could not help but be taken aback. The beauty of Israeli society is that it is made up of such a diverse tapestry of peoples, most of whom came to Israel not, believe it or not, to subjugate Palestinians, but rather to escape extreme persecution for being Jews. From the ghettos of Eastern Europe in the early 20th century to the Ethiopian Jews expelled from their homeland only a few decades ago, Israel is built on the willpower of the world's oldest abused minority.

Now, this is hardly an excuse for the innumerable sufferences of the Palestinian people at the hands of the Israeli government, but to overlook the dissenting voices of the Israeli populace (the newspaper *Ha'aretz* is a start, as well as the Meretz party's progressive stances) is foolish. It is also impossible to ignore the sheer depravity of terrorist acts committed against innocent Israelis over the course of two intifadas, the horror of which could never be understood by us Americans. Hamas really truly wants to exterminate the Jewish state, and this desire for genocide cannot be tolerated. The terror of the Seperation Wall is also something I find awful, strangling the lives of Palestinian villagers and inflicting the fear of not knowing if you'll be allowed to live in your own house tomorrow.

Having been here for two months, I have realized that the reality of Israel as an unimpeachable victim pushed on me by my synagogue is just as inaccurate as the *MRR*/punxor view that Israel is a society built on repressive, evil values. I have no idea where I stand on this incredibly complex and difficult conflict, but I plead for Americans, especially those who take their ideas from their friends, be they Zionists or Anti-Zionists, to not become so drastically polarized in opinion until seeing the land and its myriad array of spectrums for themselves. It's easy to stand thousands of miles away to pass judgment; from there we can highlight just what we want to see, ignore the rest. I find that living here is living in a massive gray area, where American zealotry looks absurd to either extreme. Smartut is a band of Israelis, and I respect their values and opinions, and think they represent the Israeli value of diversity with their radical take on the conflict. However, it is vital to remind *MRR*'s readers that it is not the only take, and you are no less hip or punk rock to identify that.

An avid fan and a loving reader,
—Josh Landes

P.S. In The Red Records kicks ass, the Black Lips and Jay Reatard have been blowing my mind of late. Loved the Randy Turner memorial.

MRR—

Bands should be fined $2 per CD with a plastic jewel case.

Let's be honest with ourselves. Plastic jewel cases hold no artistic integrity. They are boring, bland, and the plastic used in them is also linked to cancer. Why aren't more bands using cardboard jewel cases? They are sustainable, stylish, artistic and unique.

I don't know about you, but if I were an artist, creating visual art to accompany my musical art form on a cardboard jewel case would be very stimulating for my heart. I've noticed a few more cardboard jewel cases in recently months and years, but why hasn't every artist realized how important cardboard

(or mother nature created) art as being a very important thing to show that you care about your fans and also the earth in general?

The first time I bought a band's CD with accompanying cardboard jewel case was about ten years ago, and at the time that band was one of very few who had ever created such a thing for a mass scale. It was such a joy to look at, to digest, to feel... I could feel what the band meant, and who they were.

When I touch a plastic jewel case it's like standing on cold pavement in the winter, mind numbing... it doesn't give me pleasure, nor happiness, or the ability to feel what the artist wants me to see with my eyes, my ears or my heart. It's a very cold, heart numbing feeling. The musical art is great, but it's missing some "more".

Many of us have never been able to remember what a joy it was to put a record on the record player, and then hold the record sleeve next to our heart and look at it intently and digest all the beautiful things it means, feels, and holds. I remember it, because records were dying as I was just getting into them.

Bands have to create an avenue where fan and artist are one in the same. Fans want that connection. They don't want to look and feel cold plastic on a winter evening or any evening. They want to feel your heart, look into your eyes, listen to your beauty with their ears and then realize how beautiful you truly are to their hearts.

Our hearts are what make us love music. It also makes us love the people and the bands who create it. So, why have musical artists forgotten that important aspect?

—Brian Disagree
bdisagree@resist.ca

Chris Hubble Bubble Hubbard and MRR (Most Reeking Rectum) Staff—

Great for you and your Jesus-Olini-McCarthy throne to toss down the MySpace space judgment about the MySpace space. It was because of the MySpace space I have found way more bands that are good than any of your recent reviewer's reviews… Come on...the Controllers, Deep Wound, Decontrol…why can't you like a little more of the now sound? Go back to the three-sentence "Sounds like good" or "Sounds like boring" and add a couple of '80s/'90s/early-'00s common references, not some "Oh yeah, this sounds like the first Booty Fist Poker Game EP" that only you and your badass *MRR*ers know about.

In *MRR* issue #247, PC gave Grass Boots a bad review saying they were an "Onion Flavored Pipe Bomb rip-off." Well, I found Grass Boots on MySpace and they are amazing. In fact, I went to see 'em live and they had homemade instruments, bio-diesel tour van, and they threw sod at the audience! Punk! Oh and along with that I found another band that got a horrible review but I checked out their MySpace space and then went to see them in Cleveland with the Darvocets and the Bill Bondsmen and that band was…the Homo Hispanics. One of your bearded stinkos (AC) gave their CD a review in #280 and said that "Any band that has a fold-out of themselves in skin-tight cop outfits and has the opening song on their CD a thrash version of the CHiPS theme should be punched in the neck." They happen to be the best acoustic/thrash/bi-gay band around.

Opposite to that is the "over-the-top great straight edge," as GN put it in #280, I checked out the X-Tension Chord MySpace space site and from there I heard four of the nine volcano-ripping-chainsaw-shrapnel songs on their 7" that I would have overlooked (because I hate straight things) if I didn't MySpace space search them. Other bands you liked that I got to hear from the MySpace space are the Super Winners (Buzzcocks with moshish reggae, reviewed by JF in #259), The Broken Homies (hardcore hip hop reviewed by AM in #274). But a couple more bands you say sucked that are great are Hasenpfeffer Death (animal rights goth/ska, bad review by TB) and Phil A. Sheeohh with the Goods/Glumpky split 10"…this record has more punk rock than most bands wet-dream about.

I think you are making a big mistake. One person's gold is another person's shit and if you really intend to be the super-mega promo camp for DIY don't DYI (Do Yourself In) by being little hippie Hitlers. Let the bands and *MRR* staffers and contributors have their fun smashing the state from within the state of the MySpace space. Look, you are still the punk bible, it is just that the MySpace space is the Cliff's Notes to the punk bible.

—Tony Party

Dear Chris/MRR Crew—

I can't tell you how excited I was to read that *MRR* is changing their review policy to exclude any bands that have MySpace pages! MySpace doesn't have anything to do with DIY HC/Punk and I am actually pretty surprised that so many bands have logged in, signed up, and are fine with their music and ideas being relayed by this monstrosity. I was so excited, in fact, that the instant I read it in Chris' column, that I decided I would send a letter or praise and admiration for taking on such the *huge* task that weeding out bands with MySpace pages would present.

Before I wrote this letter though, I told a bunch of friends that *MRR* was taking the first step in eradicating this plague from HC/punk. One of my friends, who is a lot less excitable than me said, "Isn't that the April Fool's issue? It's probably just a joke," and my fucking bubble was burst! Fuck! Say it ain't so!

Regardless if it's a joke or not, considering banning bands with MySpace's from getting reviewed is a great idea. It's such a strong stance to make. By doing this you are taking on the masses and saying, "This shit sucks and we don't want it." Even though your review section would probably only have a handful of reviews for a while...I think that after a few months it would build back up and slowly force bands to realize what they are sacrificing for the sake of convenience. This would definitely affect a ton of my friends' band, and even the band I'm in. We are proudly MySpace free, but one of our members does have a personal page, and I'm totally willing to not get reviewed for the sake of this crusade.

If *MRR* chooses to ban MySpace bands and other zines catch on it would be a huge blow to Rupurt Murdoch and Newscorp and a huge step for HC/punk. Why should a movement/scene who wants nothing to do with society want to use their methods of communication? I mean come on, aren't all these fucking hardcore/powerviolence/grind/thrash/whatever bands embarrassed to have their music on the same page as Justin Timberlake, Fall Out Boy, or even worse Against Me!!!

Anyways, Chris, you said it, "It's quite simple: *MRR* is a punk zine and that shit aint punk!" Amen, brother. Go forth and slay the beast!

—Joe Lachut / 2163 Hoople St. / Ft. Myers, Fl 33901

MRR—

Regarding Chris Hubbard's column in *MRR* issue #287: I have been reading *MRR* since day one; I have a complete set of *MRR*s, every issue that has ever been printed. Chris says that "Effective April 1st, *MRR* will no longer review records or feature interviews by bands associated with Myspace … It's quite simple: *MRR* is a punk zine, and that shit ain't punk!"

MySpace may not be "punk," but then again the barcode that is on the cover of *MRR* isn't exactly "punk" either.

Nice April Fool's joke though Chris.

—Bonedog

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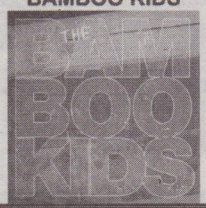

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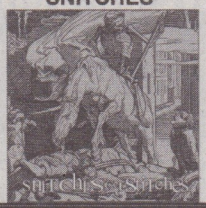

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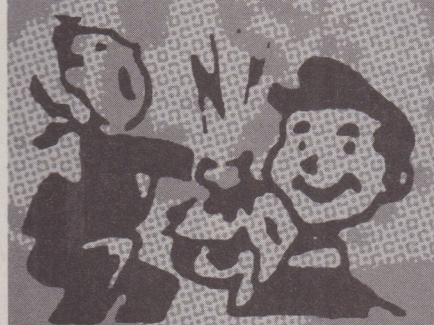

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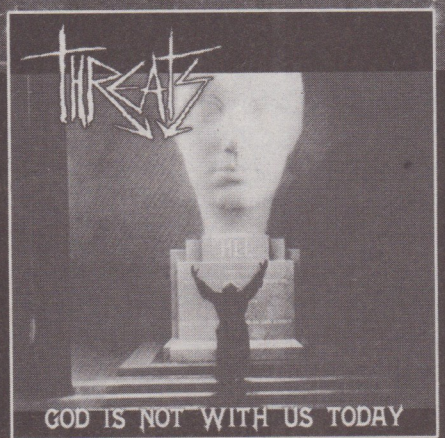

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COLUMNS

In my eternal quest to purge some of my accumulation of stuff, I have spent the weekend weeding through cassette and VHS tapes. I had a couple hundred cassettes stored in my garage, where sadly they've been exposed to extreme weather conditions and some ant infestation. There isn't much that I hate more than ants, except for cockroaches, which thankfully I'm not plagued by. As I sorted through each tape, wiping it clean of dust, dirt and or insect remains, I took a stroll through my life.

I have been making mix tapes for as long as I can remember, and my collection of tapes is important to me. Each tape marks a time period, a place, sometimes a person. There are tapes that were made for road trips and tapes that were gifts from friends. There are tapes that I made for penpals and there are dozens upon dozens of live tapes that I recorded at shows in the early '90s, and dozens more that I diligently traded with others. I used to have a list of all the live shows that I had and I would pour through others lists of old UK peace punk bands and trade my NYC punk for them. I spent countless hours dubbing tapes and writing letters, because of course the letters to penpals were just as important as the tapes we traded. I lived through those cassette tapes. If I had a favorite band, they went on a tape—a favorite song from each favorite band at any given time went onto another tape. And then those tapes traveled with me on a daily basis, whether in my Walkman or in my car stereo. I was never without tunes in my ears custom-made on my tapes. It was the fuel for my life. Making the ultimate mix tape was the inspiration for the subway ride to work or the walk to class. And the really good ones were shared with friends and taken on road trips or played at parties. Taking the ultimate selection of tapes on any given trip was mandatory and essential. We made tapes of local bands and sent them to our penpals or friends across the country. I have tapes I made by dubbing over crappy promo tapes, and I have tapes that I played till the labels peeled off and yet to this day I can identify them. There are only one or two that I have misplaced or lost over the years that to this day the empty cases almost break my heart 'cause they remind me of a missing part of myself.

There was a time when those live tapes that I made were the only way to listen to a favorite local band. You know, back in the day when bands played live but didn't necessarily make studio recordings. I know, nowadays bands have recordings before they even play shows. Ha. Somewhere along the line I got out of the habit of making live tapes and I also stopped listening to them on a regular basis. After all, many live DIY done tapes don't really sound so good. There was a time when it was all I had, but I haven't listened to most of those live tapes in years, though of course there are some exceptions.

It always surprised me how something that can be so much a part of your life can then be left for the wayside. There was a time when I didn't go to a show without recording it and photographing it. Photographing I still do, but I can't remember the last time I recorded a show. Nor can I remember the last time I traded a tape, or for that matter made a mix tape for myself. Well, I can, but it has been a while. Granted, the format has changed, and while few people are making cassette comps these days, CD mixes have picked up the slack. But there is something a bit different about CDs. Like the difference between a handwritten letter and an email, cassette tape mixes tend to have a lot of time, love, and care put into them, while most burned CDs seem fast and manic and disposable. Ultimately, whether it's a cassette or a CD, you can produce crap or you can put time and care into creating something worthwhile and amazing. But oddly enough, my point is not to lament the days of old, or to reminisce about how much better it all used to be. The fact is, there are loads of improvements and in a lot of cases it's just that things are different. I've been living in my own dark ages. I'm stubborn and not so good with change. I don't take to electronics and technology and so I fight new things in that direction. It takes me a while to warm up to things, and at a time when new media is obsolete almost as soon as it's released, it's overwhelming to try and keep up. Eventually I usually have my revelations, and come around to accept and integrate the new things that prove longstanding, worthwhile and useful.

I have long been at this weird place on the technological front, what could be the cutting edge, except that I'm anything but. When I worked at an advertising agency in the '80s, I learned things the old-school way: stat machines and waxers, typesetting machines and x-acto knives. I took an architecture class 'cause I wanted to do drafting, but AutoCAD was just being introduced and I lost interest 'cause I didn't want to do computers. Right about the time I went off to college (late 80s) computers were taking over. In college I did eventually take a computer class during the wave of desktop publishing and I was able to put that to

use with my zine. But as a photo major, I was introduced to Photoshop only as a crash course in a few days, which is so much different from today, when digital photography has all but replaced traditional darkroom techniques. Then there was the internet and email, which I was resistant to for many years, but like even the most stubborn Luddites, eventually I gave in. Now it's MySpace, which I haven't yet joined, but I'd say it's the equivalent of email in the late '90s. There is a whole generation just younger than me that has grown up with all this technology as a given, whereas I feel like I'm either one step ahead or behind it all. If I was a different person, I suppose I would be on that cutting edge, but instead I fight it as long as I can, until the various medias are tried and proven and assimilated down to the masses. And then grudgingly I might accept it.

What I find amazing is that these old tried and true formats of VHS tapes and cassettes have really become obsolete. I adore my cassette archives. Those old demo tapes are treasures. I know that a lot of people would probably look at a box of tapes and think: trash. And there are those who would want to convert them to CDs. I'm much less attached to VHS tapes, because after all, they do take up an awful lot of space. I wish I had the time and wherewithal to convert the cassettes and VHSs to CDs and DVDs, but I don't and I won't. What is amazing, though, is that these have now become disposable formats. You can't give the stuff away today. Much like old computers and other dead electronics—no one wants them and I find that absolutely amazing.

I guess I've become a bit of a broken record, as I carry on about weeding through my old crap, and about how much has changed and how the trip down memory lane is awesome, but it reminds me of how far disconnected I now feel. Kids today probably think I'm an old weirdo, as they're talking about their MySpace the way I used to write letters, and downloading songs the way I used to make mix tapes. It's really not a matter of being better or worse, it's just different. Things keep on moving along and hopefully we can make the best of what opportunities we have. I have reached my own place of being able and ready to jump into some new things, like maybe actually getting a website for my photos, among other things. And what with a new baby (we are all doing awesomely), moving to a new house, and the photo lab I work in going almost exclusively digital, my entire life right now is in total upheaval and going through major change. I still have a very hard time letting go of the past, I'm stubborn about change, and it's hard to accept some of these modern ways of doing things. Fortunately almost all of these changes in my life are positive and exciting and ultimately it should all be for the better, crazy as it all my seem.

P.S. The 20th year anniversary of *Slug & Lettuce* is happening now. However, due to the new fact that we are going to be moving house across town the actual issue is going to be delayed by a short time. Details are forthcoming.

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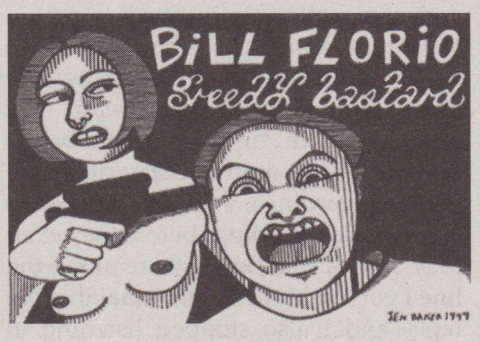


The History of the FBI's Direct Influence on Punk Rock

After years of research on the subject, I think it is time to shine light on the fact that the driving force in the music we listen to has actually been planted by conspiring factions within our own government. Just as a general disclaimer, I've withheld this information because the program has been officially cancelled and all the key players have died or retired. This, along with other harsh anti-youth programs that came with the shift in Congress this year.

The whole thing started with the death of J. Edgar Hoover in 1972. For years before this time, a young go-getter by the name of Clarence Kelley had mapped out a wide-scale plan to make sure the lessons of the "Hippie Generation" would not be repeated. The idea was to attack youth culture and set precedence for the Anti-Youth laws that eventually were passed during the Reagan and Bush administrations. This along with Broken Windows Theory and all sorts of other laws designed to keep the youth strongly divided, Anti-Gang legislation, school zone drug enforcement, mass disinformation about youth gangs "Wilding" in the '80s, etc.

Under the Hoover model, they had figured out how to keep minorities, women, and homosexuals in check for decades and plenty of other barriers to liberal thinking wrecking the capitalist agenda, but when the white sons and daughters took the side of the underprivileged in the 1960s, partially because of rock 'n' roll and other ethnic-influenced music and culture blurring the racist lines of the Euro-immigrant generation. All the folks in power for the first half of the 20th century had kept the status quo, the general repetition of wars and peace, slight prosperity cycled into deeper recession. The whole hippie thing slammed up against the Watergate scandal seriously threatened the paradigm. Without the baby-boomer generation hating their kids like the last two did with jazz and then rock'n'roll, as the hippies became parents, it was a serious problem if the next generation of kids was praised for being individuals. Washington wasn't going to stand for a future without strife to keep the masses distracted. No politician wants to tackle real issues. The fact that Jimmy Carter won the presidential election put Kelley's plan into action.

It's funny that people have the term "77 punk," because in fact, without the FBI's intervention, punk would have died in 1976. The truth is, while it was easy to alienate minority youth to the majority of the voting population, getting white America to vote against their own children was much more of a challenge. They couldn't push the "keep your kids off dope" thing, considering their parents were still using it, or had

used it in their youth. Back in the 1950s it was something where, "You're kids are on pot, they are commiserating with Negros. They will amount to nothing." In the 70s the Boomers weren't buying it—if they did all that stuff, their kids would turn our just as OK as they did: "We just can't deal with all the police brutality and wars, the kids are all right, the government is still our enemy."

Basically, Kelley chose a team of young clean-cut agents, they went to nightclubs and places where rock 'n' roll was happening, and they started with Iggy Pop. They didn't invent Iggy, they just used him as a starting point. He had the image that scared even a lot of hippie generation. His career was about over when the FBI stepped in, and basically the whole second version of the Stooges was sponsored by the Bureau. James Williamson, son of Agent Jack Williamson, was recruited into the band after being fully briefed and given orders to recruit other band's members into the program, then named OPERATION YOUNGBLOOD.

Williamson, under the team's direction, funneled money into bands that promoted antisocial behavior and messages. Sort of like an A&R person for bad youth role models, starting in New York City. Some of his early targets were HR of the BAD BRAINS, Glenn Danzig, GG Allin, Jello Biafra, Ian MacKaye (Also the son of another agent, Seamus MacKaye). There was a lot of money for the program in the late 70s, and basically once each band member was fully briefed, they were made to understand that not only would they be paid well for their services, they would also get kickbacks if they coerced others to recruit. So it basically became a competition to see who could cause the most trouble. Bonuses were awarded for getting on the nightly news. For the most part, New York was a success; punk had reached the mainstream culture as the new scary element in youth culture. A lot of the musicians were given specific missions; for instance, Brian Baker was first told to be preachy and positive, then to quickly turn to glam metal and eventually end up in whatever act needed a replacement for whoever was strung out on heroin. The FBI was out to build up heroes for dumb white kids and then make them into everything they all hate. It was a genius way to make sure everything remained scattered and totally unfocused.

Upsets: Problems in the 1980s

After four years of the program (it was a wide success as far as the Bureau was concerned—it cost very little to pay off those involved and by this time the scene was so violent there was no worry of any of the punk employees of the force whistle-blowing, considering they would be instantly hunted down by agent and punk alike.

More money was allotted, enough to forward the career of filmmaker Penelope Spheeris and since members of all the bands in the film were on the payroll, it was a wise investment. She was debriefed and released from Bureau control in 1990 where she was signed a contract that she would only make movies based on TV shows from then on.

In the meantime, laws were being passed all over the country that helped hinder constructive youth activity. Anti-skateboarding laws made sure supposedly counter-culture youths would not gather in public places. Punk had been an amazing mess of White Power; hate rock, ill thought-out near-communist liberal ideologies side by side with frat boy drinking and fighting parties. It was everything parents hated and set precedents to make sure people under 30 would always have this thorn in their side which lost them all respect from their elders. Weaker versions of punk rock developed on their own like new wave styles and goth, even stupid drug fads like raves. The FBI didn't even have to throw in a penny or an extra man to promote those things—the major label music industry was happy to cash in on whatever could sell anyway.

A problem arose when one special agent, Jello Biafra, (Godson of G. Gordon Liddy who also came up with his stage name) started getting greedy. In March of 1986 he was scheduled to be busted for running a major drug ring. The CIA was really running the drug business at the time and the Bureau didn't like the idea of the CIA selling drugs to fund their clandestine illegal domestic programs, which was the job of the FBI in the first place. One thing cops hate is when someone muscles in on their territory, and while the other punk labels we're making lots of cash for the FBI, Alternative Tentacles was not really making all that much money, even with all the publicity money that the Bureau put in. It was decided that Biafra would be made a scapegoat of sorts and he would "flee" the country and never be prosecuted. Biafra tried to turn coat, and when approached by the CIA, he made a deal to reveal to the agency what the FBI was up to for $300,000. The only problem is, he failed to notice his belt buckle was bugged. The FBI was put up against a wall—they couldn't plant the drugs on Biafra since the CIA had promised to protect him, the only thing they could do was to raid the Alternative Tentacles warehouse and kill the CIA deal and leave Jello hanging in the wind. The special agents eventually got him back by funding the other Dead Kennedy's legal defense to take the band's name and the back catalog from the rogue agent.

In 2001, the project was discontinued. It was determined that punk rock was not threatening to anyone anymore. The sight of a kid with a leather jacket and a mohawk was just laughable at this point, and music that once seemed violent and scary has been turned over into top 40 radio rock. Many of the anti-youth laws that the program tried to keep up aren't even necessary anymore, since the current youth culture is so jaded. Worries about mass voting or civil disobedience are now moot. The new thinking is more like the old thinking. With the whole terrorism angle, they have the whole racist nation back in check, looking over their shoulders for the new enemy.

Writing about metal in *Maximumrocknroll* is no longer an oxymoron.

When I was growing up it was. In Concord, California everybody at my high school (at least those into underground rock) was into A.F.I. and SCREW 32. Me? I liked NAPALM DEATH, DEICIDE and EYEHATEGOD.

I remember seeing those old Bovine ads in MRR that would mention an EYEHATEGOD EP and I'd be shocked that I liked a band that maybe wouldn't be completely ridiculed by the punk rock fashionistas in my city. If it was in MRR it must be acceptable to punks, right? Luckily I quickly stopped giving a shit what the punks thought, realizing my lack of hipster cool ultimately had little to do only with music, and just did my own thing.

Most kids seemed to get into punk first and then way down the line, in this more metal-friendly environment we live in today, they let some metal filter into their lives. My co-worker Jesse Luscious (of BLATZ, THE CRIMINALS, THE FRISK fame) is a perfect example of this—he's constantly rocking out to MANOWAR at the office (sorry to out you, Jesse, but if not me, somebody would), which probably would have been unheard of in his earlier days.

I, on the other hand was always metal, and eventually got into punk and hardcore through metal. And metal remains my first, er, love. And that dedication and commitment to the most non-poser of musics led me to convince Golnar and Chris that metal still needed to be represented in MRR, so all the closet metalheads out there—and I know there's a lot of you—can get a taste.

First up I wanted to mention some shows that I hit recently. My buddy Jason (ex-DEADBODIES EVERYWHERE, FUNERAL SHOCK, AGENTS OF SATAN) and I went to see UNLEASHED in Oakland at a place called The Metro. UNLEASHED go back to the early Swedish death metal days, and singer/bassist Johnny Hedlund was in the legendary NIHILIST. When he split from NIHILIST, he formed UNLEASHED and the rest of the band changed the name to ENTOMBED

After sitting through three mostly terrible bands including BELPHEGOR (whose singer looked like Conan The Barbarian meets Conan O'Brien) and Brazil's KRISIUN who played their usual uneventful set, UNLEASHED hit the stage to seemingly less fanfare then the openers, yet quickly stepped up as the highlight.

A lot of new tunes were played from the latest album *Midvinterblot*, but also classics like "To Asgaard We Fly," "Neverending Hate," and "Before The Creation Of Time." In true metal frontman fashion Hedlund lead the crowd in several call and response choruses, and did so without coming off as ridiculous or forced—just fuckin' fun. And of course toward the end of the evening he raised his horn chalice thing and drank in tribute to the dedicated warriors in the hall.

My first roommate ten years ago had an UNLEASHED shirt from their last US tour in 1992, and I was always jealous, as dumb as that may seem (after all, UNLEASHED has one of the best death metal logos ever). I finally achieved a lifelong goal and got me an Unleashed shirt. Good fuckin' night for metal in the Bay Area.

Toward the end of February my girlfriend Sasha and I traveled to Seattle to hang out with our friends in WORMWOOD whose latest record, *Starvation*, I released on my label. They played two record release shows in their adopted hometown with several locals including GREY, OROKU, I AM THE THORN and a few others. As usual, WORMWOOD was in a class of its own, leaving some amazed and some simply confused.

GREY plays a slow, catchy doom style that naturally brings 13 to mind, due in part to the three upfront members being women. WINTER, COFFINS and other CELTIC FROST/ HELLHAMMER inspired bands come to mind as well. Although I believe they are labelless at this point, it won't be long before someone releases a record by GREY.

OROKU really surprised me with their midpaced metallic crust onslaught. I was told by a few Seattleheads not to miss them (which is what happened last time they were in the Bay Area) and I'm glad I didn't. This band is totally powerful. The show was a release for their record out on Inimical, and you'd being doing yourself a favor to track this one down.

Enough about shows, time to get to some metal releases that need to be mentioned. First up I have to bring to your attention an album that went mostly overlooked when it was released in 2006, REPUGNANT's *Epitome of Darkness* CD.

If you, like me, were left feeling cheated by DEATH BREATH's lame label/press-hyped pisstake on old school death metal then REPUGNANT is the perfect antidote. One of the dirtiest, filthiest, ripping death metal albums to come out of Sweden since about 1991. A perfect cross between the first ENTOMBED LP and Sweden's vile blackened filth-peddlers NIFELHEIM.

Epitome of Darkness was released on Soulseller Records on CD and an LP and picture LP are due to be released hopefully by the time this column hits. Absolutely essential for those into Swedish death metal circa 1988 to 1992. With songs like "From Beyond The Grave" and the (in my mind) hit single "Premature Burial" you simply can't go wrong. Easily a top-ten-of-2006 release.

Next up I have to mention a couple records being released by The End Records in the United States. First the new album from MELECHESH called *Emissaries*. MELECHESH are from Israel originally but have since emigrated to Europe. A lot of people reference NILE when talking about MELECHESH because of the Mesopotamian and Egyptian themes, but whereas NILE comes from a death metal background, MELECHESH approaches it from a black metal foundation.

And they actually make NILE seem ridiculous in comparison. MELECHESH are far superior. Every song on *Emissaries* is packed full of insanely catchy yet technically masterful guitar riffs and weird Middle Eastern melodies and chants. Songs like "Rebirth Of The Nemesis" and "Deluge Of Delusional Dreams" will be stuck in your head for days. I played this record five times in a row when I first got it. Everyone remotely into metal should love this record. Released by Osmose Productions in Europe.

Also being released by The End in

the US and Moonfog throughout Europe is the comeback record from Norway's DODHEIMSGARD. A few of you might know that DODHEIMSGARD originally started as a typical black metal band in the mid 90s that included Fenriz from DARKTHRONE in their lineup. With the release of their *Satanic Art* EP nearly ten years ago they took a huge right turn in favor of weird experimentalism that combined their old style with the style of other bands they had been involved in like AURA NOIR and VED BUENS ENDE with a post-modern eccentricity. The horribly titled *666 International* LP came next and took things completely off the charts of anything anyone had really heard.

Now, seven or so years later DODHEIMSGARD returns with the *Supervillian Outcast* album. It continues in the oddball yet addictive style of the last LP, but with a better flow and seemingly more consistent approach. DODHEIMSGARD mixes up so many styles into their sound—black metal, world music, electronic—that on paper it sounds like a total mess, yet somehow it works. I also have grown strangely fond of the demented BEACH BOYS meets VED BUENS ENDE a capella interludes. If you've got an extremely open mind when it comes to experimentation with your metal, then give *Supervillian Outcast* a try.

Although both would probably hate to be called metal, I have to mention the new split LP from HATRED SURGE and THE ENDLESS BLOCKADE recently released on Schizophrenic Records. This is one more for the grindcore and powerviolence lovers out there. Totally raging on both sides. HATRED SURGE's one-man/one-woman grind devastation has all the elements that make a great side, incessant blasts, killer breaks, dual vocals. THE ENDLESS BLOCKADE is one my favorite bands lately. They do a pretty even mix of fast powerviolence and monstrously crushing doom. Both bands have more coming in 2007 and this LP has a great layout, a 12x24 full color insert, and comes on half black half red vinyl.

TYRANNY's *Tides Of Awakening* CD on Finland's Firedoom Music wins the title of most crushing, wrist-slicing funeral doom of 2006. Five tracks spread over an hour of impossibly low vocal agony, super low-end yet ambient riffing and un-ridiculous synth arrangements. Makes SKEPTISISM seem upbeat by comparison.

BLOODY PANDA has their first album about to be released on the Level Plane label. The band sent me a copy last year and they're doing a somewhat different spin on the recent slow motion doom trend. They've got the slow, plodding rhythms and downtuned, wall-of-sound guitars intact, but the vocals set them apart from the pack. Vocalist Yoshiko Ohara comes with a mix of the usual screeching and an awesome take on Jarboe-style singing, making BLOODY PANDA come off as something like a BURNING WITCH meets SWANS (mid-period) behemoth. Aside from the vocalist the band all wears black cloaks and hoods when they play, if you go in for that sort of thing. A split album with KAYO DOT was also released recently by Holy Roar Records. The band should be touring the east coast during April.

NADJA also does a heavy doom guitar drone style. The excellent *Truth Becomes Death* was released by Alien 8 a year or two ago and since then a lot of stuff has materialized, most recently *Thaumogenesis* on the Archive CD label. Archive is known for their great packaging and this one comes in a neat fold-out cardstock with the CD stuck right onto it on a plastic hub. Musically this isn't my favorite NADJA release. One long track of very moody MY BLOODY VALENTINE, stripped down and slowed to 16 rpm. Sold out through the label but still available through various distros.

OBSCURUS ADVOCAM is the name of a new project featuring members of GLORIOR BELLI. Their debut Verbia Daemonicus is out on Battle Kommand Records, the label run by Blake of NACHTMYSTIUM Mid-paced black metal aggression done with reasonable skill and craft. If you're new to the genre or need to have everything then you should enjoy this. However, if like me you've been listening to black metal for upwards of 15 years or more and have become more discerning in your habits, then this one probably won't really scratch you where you itch.

That's about it for this first column. You can send stuff directly to me at Dave Adelson, 2340 Powell Street #117, Emeryville, CA 94608 USA, donttry@20buckspin.com. Please be aware that if you send something directly to me it won't be considered for review in the regular reviews section unless you send a copy to the regular MRR address as well.

One final note. I have to dedicate this first column to ROKY ERICKSON for putting on an immaculate show at the Great American Music Hall in San Francisco and putting most so-called rock legends to shame. Until next time...

I'm recovering from another rainstorm here. Well, there weren't any problems this time, thankfully. Nothing like last May, when 12 inches of rain got dumped on the area and the downstairs of our house got fucked up a bit. Not even as bad as a few weeks ago, when there was a snow/rain/sleet storm that only brought a few inches but we nearly got flooded from the front of the house this time and I caught it just in time. Gee—makes me wonder if these theories about global warming or man-made climate change may have a grain of truth in them. Nah—it's a LIB'RAL PLOT. That's what it is. Anyway, I went to a few stores to try and get some sand or rock salt and everyone was out of stock. My driveway and walk had sheets of ice and we needed something out there so no one would break their neck—especially us. Someone suggested I put kitty litter on the driveway so I got three ten-pound bags and put them down. That stopped us from slipping but made a complete mess as it essentially turned to clay. I still need to power-wash the walk but our hose is busted.

What a fun time I had chiseling some of that clay off my boots. Almost as much fun as last month, when there was a "pizza mosh" at a basement show in town. It was advertised there would be free pizza. What *wasn't* advertised was it would be delivered during the first band's set and the cartons passed around the dance floor. I did manage to grab one slice and almost burned my hand as the mozzarella dripped down my fingers. Of course, some of that mozzarella also ended up on the floor. So I get home and it's all caked onto the bottom of my sneakers. It was fun chiseling the cheese, let me tell 'ya. Hmm… chiseling the cheese. I think I just came up with a new euphemism for… oh, never mind.

But I was prepared for this storm—I extended the gutter spouts so the water would drain away from the house. I made sure the slush was removed so the water wouldn't trap around the house again. The sump pump started to run and I noticed that where the pipe comes out at the end of garage, it's below the lip of the driveway asphalt and wasn't spraying the water forward. I had to find a way to extend that pipe—so I put a vacuum cleaner attachment on the end and it extended upward at a 45-degree angle and when water would exit through it—well, you can imagine what came into my mind.

Enough potty/phallic talk. Sure, taking care of the house can be a pain in the ass, but we *have* a house. Unfortunately, my awesome neighbors across the street just had to move out of the house they'd lived in since the 1960s. They left this week, in fact. It wasn't really by choice. It was occupied by a brother and sister, Ronnie and Myra, both in their 50s and I don't think either one ever got married. There was another brother who lived there until recently, kind of a black sheep that Ronnie would refer to as a "prick" and an "asshole." I only talked to the guy once and I'd say the description was accurate. Both of their parents have passed on—their mother died about three years ago.

In any case, to make a long story short, Ronnie has been unable to find work since '01. His sister works as a daycare provider. Money ran short and the house ended up in foreclosure. It got sold before it hit the auction block, thankfully. It was purchased by a couple, with the intention of renovating and reselling. Something sucks about that—I imagine they got a pretty good deal on it and it'll cost money to renovate but, to me, it feels like taking advantage of someone's bad fortune, just to make a buck. I know there are a lot of folks out there who do that kind of speculation, as an investment opportunity. And, of course, Ronnie and Myra do get some money out of it at least.

The upshot, though, is they're not living here anymore. They rented part of a two family across town. You couldn't have a better neighbor than this guy. I mentioned him in the column that I wrote about the flood last year, how he helped me figure out what the fuck I was going to do. He even helped me break into my house one time when I got locked out! He said we're not getting rid of him completely. I get the feeling he'll be back here from time to time and he's basically let it be known that if I need anything, I know where to find him. Ellen and I both thanked him for all the help he's given us and he shrugged it off by saying he was just being a neighbor.

It was sad seeing him pack and box everything up in the past few weeks. I could tell it was taking a huge emotional toll on him. I helped him put some giveaway items on Craig's List and a local internet mailing list called FreeCycle and we were able to get rid of the stuff right away. It saved him the trouble of having to haul it away. There was a lot of stuff to get rid of—40 plus years' worth.

I just took a look outside. It's quiet. There are two dumpsters and one is filled a bit beyond capacity. Earlier today, there was one of those Bobcat vehicles scooping up debris and putting it in the dumpster. The operator was having some difficulty with it, at first, and I have to admit it was kind of entertaining to watch. We wondered if the stuff would end up all over the street. Ellen joked that our lives must be pretty pathetic if that was providing such entertainment.

It won't be as entertaining to watch that place get renovated. Because I know who won't be living there anymore…

Since December, I've been a member of the local YMCA (I can hear you humming THE VILLAGE PEOPLE song—STOP IT!). It was getting too cold to walk outside and I wanted to continue my exercise regimen since it had been working pretty well, all last year. It's a brand new facility, perhaps a bit sterile but it's fine for my purposes. I've only had limited interaction with people in the locker room and hot-tub (ahhh) and, when I work out, I have the headphones on and block everyone and everything out. I've heard that coldness in social interaction is a trait of this area and I'd be inclined to agree, although I try to be friendly, at least when I'm not exercising.

The treadmills are situated in front of five large-screen TVs and it's inevitable that I'll glance up at them. It's not a revelation that so much of it is mindless drivel. On CNN, there will be a report from Iraq, but they're just as likely to give an inordinate amount of air time to such important stories as Anna Nicole Smith's death. I heard that when she was buried, there were updates about the progress. No joke. Ehh… I don't even want to go on about that stuff. It just makes me remember why people end up anesthetized and don't pay attention to what's really going on in the world. Or when they do see the mainstream media reports, it usually glosses over what's going on or presents a warped perspective. I'm stating the obvious, of course.

Back to my YMCA routine. For a change of pace, each Saturday I'll go to the YMCA in Lynn, about 15 minutes from where I live and the city in which I resided for nearly 15 years. My Saturday sojourn there actually started by accident. On a Saturday about a month and a half ago, I arrived at the Peabody Y and saw that the parking lot was beyond full. I decided to go to Lynn and get my mail at my PO box and, en route, I remembered that my membership allowed me to use that facility, as well. It's a lot older and more run-down than the brand new Peabody Y. Anyway, my first time there, I ran into my childhood friend Ed, who I've known since I was six years old. I can't remember if I've written about him

before but he was one of the "good ones" I knew growing up. He wasn't a close friend but he was also someone who didn't treat me like crap, except the time we got into a tussle (I forget why) and, somehow, his tooth ended up giving me a gash around my hairline and I needed stitches. I still remember when my mom took me to see Dr. Brown and he took a look at it and went "Eccch!" I always liked his method of diagnosis. I'd go in with a sore throat, he'd put the tongue depressor in my mouth and say, "you're sick." He was crotchety but you could tell he was a nice guy underneath. Hell, he even did a house call one time—I remember him coming in with the obligatory black doctor's bag and greeting me with a gruff "how ya doin', chief? I liked this guy so much that, even though he was a pediatrician, he remained my doctor almost continuously until I was 23. He was the type of doctor that I'd call at 7:30 in the morning, he'd answer the phone and tell me to come right down.

Got sidetracked again—a hallmark of my columns! Back to Ed—I reconnected with him around '96 when Ellen and I were watching the Noam Chomsky documentary"Manufacturing Consent" and there was a brief segment where Chomsky was interviewed on a Lynn public access show. I did a double take when I saw that Ed was doing the interviewing and I turned to Ellen and said "I've known that guy since I was a kid!" I found his number in the book, gave him a call and told him what I'd just seen. Since then, we've been in sporadic contact but it's been a lot more frequent the past few years. He's a great guy—politically progressive and something of an agitator/activist. He's been fighting with the town of Swampscott, where we grew up and where he lives, over being able to put a show on public access TV. The town moderator says that only town meetings and such can be broadcast over the station, which he claims isn't "public access." If you're curious about what Ed's doing, he has a blog: http://freespeechin swampscott.blogspot.com. Check it out.

So we're working out yesterday and talking some politics. There were a few other gentlemen working out there, as well. Somehow, the conversation turned to immigration. The city of Newton, MA, which tends to be fairly liberal/progressive, is trying to allow immigrants with permanent residential status to vote in local elections. The Board of Aldermen passed it by a 20-4 margin. An article in the *Newton Tab* says, *"the initiative passed by the board extends only to those who are willing to submit a declaration, signed under pains and penalties of perjury (for which, if convicted, one could be deported), averring that they want to become U.S. citizens and, if eligible, have started that process."* Three other towns—Cambridge, Amherst and Wayland—also liberal communities, passed similar measures and some of the towns are attempting to get the Mass. legislature to give them the authority to grant those voting rights. Not everyone is pleased, such as Lorrie Hall from the Massachusetts Coalition for Immigration Reform. A *Boston Globe* piece says, *"her group opposes the proposal because it diminishes the privilege of voting and removes a motivation to become a citizen. "Why become a citizen if you get all the privileges reserved for citizens?" she said."* By the way, on their web page, it says that the coalition is *"dedicated to reducing legal and illegal immigration."* I kind of figured they'd be hostile to *any* type of immigration. And the organization is listed on a site with other immigration reform groups—and some of them are quite dubious, such as various Minuteman factions, some of which have connections to white supremacist organizations.

In any case, I think what's being proposed in Newton is a pretty good idea. The immigrants are part of the community. I'm sure, contrary to what Hall says, many of them would like to become US citizens. In the meantime, they pay taxes, they contribute economically and they should have a say in what happens in their city. The guys working out with us certainly don't agree with that sentiment. They started talking about how the immigrants come here to go on welfare, etc. I turned to Ed and said, quietly, "those poor oppressed white males." He smiled back at me and I'd guess he agreed with what I'd said. At that point, I decided it was a *very* good time to put the headphones back on and listen to some old music by Roach Motel (an 80s Florida hardcore band who, at one point, included *MRR's* own George Tabb). There are back to back songs on there called "Make Me Sick" and "Shut Up." It captured the moment perfectly.

MUSIC REVIEWS:

APPALACHIAN TERROR UNIT - Armageddon Won't Be Brought By The Gods (Profane Existence, 7" EP)

Straight outta West Virginia—crusty hardcore punk. A spoken intro with somber accompaniment and then the pillage begins. Harsh female/male dual vocals and heavy, piledriving riffage and metallic squalls. The subject matter isn't exactly cheery, as you'd expect, summed up on the title track with the line *"humanity has been lost."* Following a standard musical/lyrical path but it's convincing. (PO Box 8722, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.profaneexistence.com)

BAYONETTES - We're Doomed (Deranged, 7" EP)

Brash, tuneful punk without being sappy-sounding. Vocals that go from sweet to piercing and back again. Despite the upbeat-sounding music, there's some darkness in the title track and "Take This Pill," while the other two songs deal with affairs of the heart, also from a less-than-cheery outlook. There's a tough '77 era spirit, something that's quite in vogue of late, but bands such as the Bayonettes make it sound fresh all over again. (1166 Chaster Rd., Gibsons, BC, VON 1V4, CANADA, www.derangedrecords.com)

BEHIND ENEMY LINES - One Nation Under The Iron Fist Of God (Profane Existence, CD)

There's really no missing the point of Behind Enemy Lines' crusade; there's not much subtlety. Behind Enemy Lines' third musical state of the world address includes commentary about US military aggression, the profound neglect of the victims of Hurricane Katrina and the attacks on so-called looters, overseas aggressive and the dangers of religious fundamentalism. Cries of pain, to quote Discharge. The same sonic missive—thick, heavy Scandinavian-inspired hardcore at a quick pace and the lead and backing vocals are angry and anguished. The disc comes with a bound booklet that includes lyrics and visual imagery.

Once again, no missing the point. Unbridled intensity. (PO Box 8722, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.profane-existence.com)

BELCHING PENGUIN - Demos 1985/ 1988 (Burrito, 7" EP)

First off, one complaint. This record has way too much surface noise. Perhaps it's from the colored vinyl but, in any case, it detracts a bit. Belching Penguin were a Florida hardcore punk band—they released one album in 1986, *"Draft Beer… Not Me."* Side one features songs from their '85 demo, done as a three-piece and the flip consists of uncirculated demo songs from '88. Raw, energetic hardcore punk inspired by DRI and a tiny whiff of crossover. They also had a sense of humor and I imagine that the name of the band probably tips their hand. I imagine that's also made obvious by "Dead People Can't Drive" and "Senators' Wives." There's even a childhood trauma revisited on "Box Lunch." What was interesting is the fact that the guys stuck to the thrashin' approach in '88, after it had fallen out of favor. Comes with a xeroxed photo/flyer booklet and fold out poster—and that has a recent interview with their bass-player Jeff Jewhurst. A nice bit of archaeological musical digging here. (PO Box 3204, Brandon, FL 33509-3204, www.soundideadistribution.com)

BREATHING FIRE (Painkiller, 7" EP)

This Southeastern Mass. band just reconvened after a few years off and this is a pressing of their 2004 demo. Spasmodic thrash and heavier, oozing breakdowns that create a menacing ambiance. "Exile," for instance, slows to a snail's pace and just hangs there in the air. There's definitely a doomy metal influence in there (particularly for "Gates Of Ivory" to go along with the piledriving hardcore. You gotta be in the mood for this type of bludgeon effect. Like a killing spree mood. (8 Burney St., #1, Boston, MA 02120, www.painkillerrecords.com)

BRUTAL KNIGHTS - Feast Of Shame (Deranged, CD)

The Toronto garage/punk miscreants are back for another go-round. The hand-written lyric sheet is tough to read (I REALLY need to invest in a magnifying glass) but the sarcasm-with-a-message-sorta comes through for "Government Asshole," "The Perfect Buffet" and "We Have A Website." Jay Reatard did the mixing and the result is a rougher and trebly sound this time around but the Knights haven't altered the formula that much. It remains loud, rambunctious and a lot of fun if not *quite* as good as the first album. (1166 Chaster Rd., Gibsons, BC, VON 1V4, CANADA, www.derangedrecords.com)

CAREER SUCIDE - Attempted Suicide (Deranged, CD)

Career Suicide seldom disappoints and this album is no exception. What do you need to know? Snotty, ranting vocals and a high-powered hardcore punk sound that also rocks. Not in that contrived gas station jacket wearing, clichéd devil horn way. Not RAWK, in other words. It's mixed into the flail and the songs hang onto their catchiness, as well. Having drummer Brandon Ferrell (Direct Control, Government Warning, Municipal Waste) behind the kit makes a big difference, as well—dude can flat out PLAY and he keeps the songs moving like a motherfucker, even when they slow it down a tad for the title track. Bottom line—this is one of the best bands going today. After so many releases, one would think they'd be getting stale but Career Suicide sound positively inspired and inspiring here. (1166 Chaster Rd., Gibsons, BC, VON 1V4, CANADA, www.derangedrecords.com)

CIDER - They Are The Enemy (Painkiller, LP)

Most of these songs originally came out on a 7" on Painkiller but the band weren't happy with the sound quality so here it is again on a 12", along with three decent demo recordings from '96 and a live song recorded in 2004. A much hotter mix this time. The Clevo nastiness—as mentioned in the review of "Battle of The Worst Bands" compilation, Cider and their compatriots had a chip on their shoulder, to use a cliché. A wanton, fuzzed-out sound with guitar and bass merged into a molten sheet of sound. A combination of breakneck hardcore and taking an oi-ish turn for the live "Thanks For Nothing." A phony British accent ("we're British from Cleveland") that turn redneck (?!) by the end of the 7" tracks. Quality antisocial punk rock. (8 Burney St., #11, Boston, MA 02120, www.painkillerrecords.com)

RABIES - Test Your Might (Sorry State, LP)

Snotty west coast skate 'n destroy punk and picking up where the 7" left off. The production is bright without getting too flashy—it enhances Rabies' burning properties. Also, there's no way I would have known that "Plateau" was a Meat Puppets cover if I hadn't read the credits and Rabies' version is a high speed dismembering of the Puppets' laid back acoustic-flavored composition, at least until the end. The other cover is by Magnolia Thunderpussy, an '80s SST Records band and, while I remember the band's name, I don't remember the song. It's another changeup, an oddball ending to this searing album. To steal from Agression (another skate punk band) a bit, these guys have found an effective way to release intense energy. (www.deadmetaphor.com/sorrystate)

RETAINERS - Teenage Regrets (Fash ion-able Idiots, 7" EP)

Love the packaging here—a cut manila folder with a hand screened cover. As for the EP, it's OK. Raw, distorted garage and surfy elements and nearly inaudible vocals under the din. Side one, with "Teenage Regrets" and "Zombie Caliente," are the best tracks. PO Box 580131, Minneapolis, MN 55458, www.fashionableidiots.com)

SCAPEGOAT (Painkiller, 7" EP)

Lumbering heaviness alternating with blast-thrash mania. A few Boston area bands are following this Crossed Out/Infest-inspired template and Scapegoat is one of them. Lyrical fragments screamed from the gut and a thick, cacophonous sound delivered intensely. This isn't catchy stuff—it's intense and the recording is full-sounding. Provocative fold-out poster sleeve, as well. (8 Burney St., #1, Boston, MA 02135, www.painkillerrecords.com)

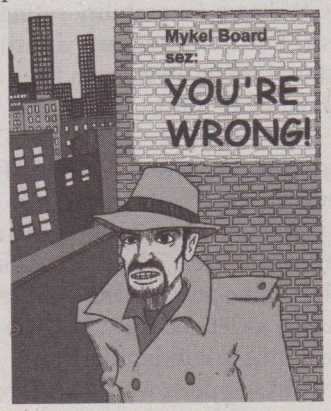
VARIOUS - Planet Of Friends (Boycott The Fencewalker, CD)

This is an international compilation put together by a gentleman from Russia named Vova, who plays in a few of the bands on this comp (Hoods Up 495, Frank Castle Gonna Break Your

Neck and The Razor Bois). It's to benefit his friend Alem Assefa, a dark-skinned man of Ethiopian descent who was beaten into a coma by Nazi scumbags in Moscow. Alem is disabled and the funds from this comp will go towards his medical treatment. The collection is haphazard and the sound quality is equally uneven. Gleaning the highlights: Learn's sweeping hardcore is well-executed. Common Enemy and the 4 Sivits' straight-ahead punk fare pretty well. Dean Dirg's brief garage punk blast is one of the best moments here. Black SS are raging, as always. Some other bands of note include ANS, Vitamin X and the Tangled Lines. Punk, hardcore, street punk, crust, even some hip hop from Hoods Up 495. Even if the lineup of bands here (27 of 'em) doesn't entice you, at least check out the webpage set up to help Alem—http://en.pomogi.org. (daddydamage@ gmail.com)

WOUND UP - s/t (Painkiller, 7")

Three songs of angry punk rock bile, done at a medium pace and quite rockin'. The first song is "How To Make Friends and Influence People" and, if anything, Wound Up doesn't sound as though they want to be anyone's friend, in light of the two other songs, "Fuck Fashion" and "You're All Wrong." It's a lame description, but Donald Jeffers' vocals are murderous sounding and, yes, they *do* sound wound up. Incidentally, one of the guitar players used to play with late '80s youth crew stalwarts Unit Pride but this is something a lot different. And better. (8 Burney St., #1, Boston, MA 02120, www.painkillerrecords.com)



"Ninety percent of the politicians give the other ten percent a bad reputation"
—Henry Kissinger

"If you're going to do something right, why bother doing it at all?"
—Mykel Board

By the time you read this, I'll be back from my trip to Australia and New Zealand. As I write it, I haven't yet left. Before I leave, there are two things I want to write about. That's why there are two parts to this column.

Of course, there's a chance I'll fly into some building or die from spongebrain caused by mad kangaroo disease. You never know. So if this is my last column, let it at least be a mediocre one.

PART ONE: In a novel called *Skinny Dip*, Carl Hiaasen writes about a fake ecological charity. Created by agricultural and industrial polluters, the organization poses as an earth-friendly bunch. They go door-to-door asking residents if they "support the rain forests."

"Certainly," people say. "I'm concerned about damage to the rain forests."

Then the hustlers explain how that means that Congress needs to allow agribusiness to cut down US trees and drill for oil in the American wilderness. If they do it here, they won't have to do it in Indonesia. That saves rain forests.

The plot is pure satire. A vision of a *1984*-like world. A newspeak world where the fox protects the chickens by making more foxes.

Life imitates art. Two of the most evil Republicans, Joe Lieberman and John McCain, have joined in a clear... But let's go back to the beginning.

I'm wiping the Vicks VapoRub from my balls. Aah, that was nice. A new PornoTube vid. A long one. Seven minutes of one guy and his webcam, but yowsah! What a show!

As I finish wiping up, I notice an envelope sticking out from the pile of papers on my desk. It's from The Environmental Defense Fund. Usually, I just toss this stuff. These groups are all the same. Some stupid *save-the-something* organization that will give me a canvas bag with a picture of the earth on it... in exchange for a minimum donation of $25. Yeah right.

But for some reason, I open this one. Sure as semen, it asks for money. *But*, it's signed Joe Lieberman and John McCain! Yikes! What's the scam? Reading further, I see that it wants laws to create *pollution credits*. These allow corporations to trade their filth-creation rights. The LeberCain crew says:

Such a system encourages innovation and creates incentives for companies to find the least-costly technologies that allow people to do what they need to do in their daily lives—from heating homes to driving cars—while meeting our environmental responsibilities.

The idea of *pollution credits* is mind-boggling. It's saying that **A** can break the law if **B** sells **A** credits for the times **B** *doesn't* break the law. Instead of making pollution illegal, it says that it's OK to pollute, as long as you give money to someone who doesn't pollute.

It's the ultimate extension of the market economy. A right to violate the law that you can buy from or sell to someone else. Amazing! And, they offer a canvas tote bag with a picture of the earth on it.

"Wow!" I think. "What an idea! I've got to get myself to Bar Nomiso and check this out."

I walk down Bleecker Street to the little bar around the corner from where CBGBs used to be. I look for the small blue neon sign. Most people just pass the place by.

"What's a Nomisu?" they think, hurrying down the bock to *The Model Bar.*

Entering the bar, I wave to George Metesky, the bartender. About my size, he has a full head of dark black hair and a belt-busting waistline. He's been here 30 years and looks exactly like he did when he started. I wonder how he does it.

I glance around at the mostly empty bar and walk to the back. I enter the door under the sign that says MEN. The room is empty. I go into the third stall, and scrunch up under the toilet tank. Pressing out the hollowed wall, I push through to the other side.

The men's room I leave looks much like the one I entered, but I've done this before. I know the truth. I've entered a trial world. A world of ideas, where I can test my theories.

Coming out of the men's room, I stop at the bar.

"Hi, George," I say.

"Got a new theory?" he asks me.

I smile.

"Give me a Wild Turkey with a Brooklyn chaser," I tell him.

He shakes his head and whistles. After pouring the drinks, I pound back the W.T. and suck down the Brooklyn Lager.

"That'll run ya' eight-fifty," says George.

"I'm running a tab," I tell him. "Fill it up again."

The goddess bartendress Sharon introduced me to Wild Turkey about ten years ago. For those who get a buzz from Bud Lite, I'll tell you W.T. is hardcore. It burns the stomach and numbs the brain. One shot will make you woozy. Two shots will get you drunk. You won't make it to four.

I beat this one back, slamming my glass down hard. George knows that means another. I down that one. Then another. Then:

"One more!" I yell, "I shink zhatsh almosht enough."

"Mykel," says George, "you're 65 years old and five-foot-three. Don't you think you've had enough?"

"*One more*!" I yell, even louder.

George shakes his head.

"Sorry, Mykel," he says. "I'm cutting you off."

"Ah hah!" I tell him. "Zhachs what I wash hopin' you'd shay! Shee, you *can't* cut me off! I got Drunk Credits!"

I open my wallet and pull out an officially signed and sealed document. I pass it over to George.

"I got 'em off zhis Morman," I say. "He never drinksh, sho he wazhn't gonna uzhe 'em. Costsh me eighty dollars, but I can drink till I puke."

George examines the documents, shrugs, and pours me another drink. I slam it back... and puke.

Puking on a bar floor is usually a signal that it's time to leave that bar. Debating briefly whether I can manage the superhero feat of jumping from the stool to the floor, I take the plunge. And plunge I do, slipping in my own barf, smashing cheek-first into the wooden floor. The smell of vomit fills my nose and makes me sicker. The guffaws of the other patrons barely penetrate my pickled brain.

Somehow I manage to crawl out of the bar and prop myself up against the side of the building. Fishing a copy of the *New York Post* out of a garbage can, I use the sports section to clean the blood and puke off the side of my face.

I'm not feeling too good. I puke again, using the paper to wipe my mouth off. Suddenly it hits. The beer and W.T. have worked themselves through my system and now press against my bladder, begging for release.

Usually, I can't piss in public. But if I'm drunk enough, I can let loose that steaming yellow stream almost anywhere. That includes against this cop car parked at the curb. I expect this will cause some fun. I'm right.

"OK, Buster," comes the Brooklyn-bred voice to my left. "Who the fuck do you think you are?"

I look and see two guys in uniform. Both with mustaches. Both with faces as blurry as an *MRR* band photo. Before I have time to reinsert my little friend inside his cubbyhole, I feel my arms being pulled behind my back.

"You're under arrest," says one of the mustaches. "Public urination, defacing public property, indecent exposure and...and resisting arrest."

"I'm afraid not, officers," I say. "If you'll reach into my back pocket you'll see my Public Urination Credits. I bought them off this woman in Montana. She lives by herself in the woods and rarely goes into town. She can pee anywhere and no one will know. Montana is a big state with nothing but trees. She sold me her credits real cheap. She was never gonna use 'em."

Before they ask, I continue, "I also have Indecent Exposure Credits I bought from an injured Iraqi vet. Friendly fire blew off his personal equipment, so he has nothing he can expose. Sold me his credits."

The cop reaches into my back pocket to pull out and examine the papers. I use the temporary relaxation of restraint to put myself back into my pants. Despite the long wagging in the wind, a few last drops drip down the inside of my leg.

The cops know they're helpless against my credits. They get back in the car and take off. As for me, ah, zee night eez young!

Slightly more sober, I start my trek toward Hell's Kitchen. Staggering up the street, I skirt the muggers spending their Mugging Credits (purchased from spinsters in Des Moines) ripping off Japanese tourists. On Eleventh Ave. I pause, stopped in my tracks by the screams of burning people caught in a building with inadequate fire escapes.

The landlord had purchased his Building Code Violation Credits from a Wyoming log cabin builder. The arsonist, I later learn, got his Arson Credits from a scuba diver in Miami.

Me? I'm heading for the 16-year-old hooker on 41st Street, right behind the Port Authority bus terminal. A hot Latina who is, in another world, jailbait. But I've got a pocketful of Teen Sex Credits, and my little no-longer-dripping friend is aching to use 'em.

"Maritza! Maritza!" I shout, waving my credits in the air. "I've got credits! I've got credits!"

"Mykel! Mykel!" comes a Spanish-tinged voice. "Tu tienes dinero tambien?"

"Si!" I shout, "Lo tengo!"

Soon we're joined in conjugal bliss, my aging equipment solidly strong thanks to Erection Credits I bought from a priest in Milwaukee. All too soon, the night is over and I have to return to that old men's room in Bar Nomiso.

Maritza and I do a quick fifth one; I head back to the bar, a smile pasted on my face. I wave to George as I head for the men's room into the stall and out the other side. It would be nice if there were credits that would give me more than a day on the other side, but those kinds of credits do not exist... yet.

Trading credits to break the law, huh? Maybe it's not such a bad idea.

PART TWO: According to the latest poll, GW has a favorability rating of 27 percent. Even Republicans are running to distance themselves from the guy.

But what if things aren't that clear-cut? My favorite authors—Celine, Hamsun—were Nazis. Even Jimmy Carter, my favorite human, was not a great president. So you separate the person from the idea. The artist from the art. The politician from the politics. And you judge independently. You see value in one, while not liking the other.

So what happens when a person you really hate shows the kind of moral integrity you really love? What happens when someone who is wrong about

everything is wrong in a way that you have to admire? What happens is George W. Bush.

As time passes, I'm liking the guy more and more. I don't like the war. I don't like the religious shit. But I like him. He lost the last election for the Republicans. He wants to strengthen troops in a massively unpopular war. A war that most people (including me) think should be ended immediately. He doesn't give a shit about public opinion, or elections, or even the Constitution, for that matter.

Bill Clinton was his opposite. Clinton had to read the opinion polls to know which shoelace to tie first. He never made a decision without fifty advisors telling him what everybody else thought.

Bush isn't like that. He has his ideas and he sticks with them. Like an anarchist throwing a bomb on Haymarket Square, he has a clear vision of the omelet he has to break eggs to make.

Someone told me that twelve percent of the American people believe Bush is right in increasing the troop strength. *Twelve percent?* But he doesn't care. I have to admire him for that.

ENDNOTES: [email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com) or website viewers (www.mykelboard.com) will get live links and a chance to email comment on the column]

—> *Now don't you feel superior dept:* Yeah, the last column was my annual April Fools column. The truth is that I have *not* converted to Islam. The method of conversion, of course, was also bogus. All the bible and Koran quotes, however, were real, as were the endnotes.

—> *Now don't you feel safe dept: The Washington Post* notes that two members of the Montgomery County Homeland Security Department walked into the library in Bethesda, Maryland. They announced that "the viewing of Internet pornography is forbidden." After the announcement, one of the men challenged an Internet user's choice of websites and "asked him to step outside." A librarian intervened. Someone else called the local cops. The *Homelanders* left. Later that afternoon, Bruce Romer, the County's chief administrative officer, called the incident "unfortunate" and "regrettable."

"The security division is not responsible for enforcing obscenity laws," he said.

The homeland officers have since been reassigned to other duties.

—> By the time you read this, I'll be back from Australia. Unfortunately, I won't have a chance to see Ayers Rock. Actually, I'll *never* have a chance to see Ayer's Rock. It is no longer Ayer's Rock.

In a case of political correctness rivaling the worst of the academics, Ayer's Rock has been renamed ULURU—its aboriginal name. Now I wonder when they're going to rename Delaware—LENAPE? That's what the original Delaware Indians called themselves. At least that's what I've heard in New Iroquois.

—> *As if you need another reason to hate her dept:* Hillary Clinton has joined with our old pal Joe Lieberman in introducing The Family Entertainment Protection Act. The bill requires heavy fines for retailers who sell "violent or explicit" games to minors. Sure Hill, support the Iraqi war, but you wouldn't want to give the kids violent video games, now would you?

—> *Twin Brains? dept:* People who guessed at *whatsmyimage.com* don't seem to fall for stereotypes. The website had people guess GPAs for female students with bra cup sizes from A to DD. Web surfers guessed A-cup students to have only a .3 point average above their D-cup classmates.

Even that was probably skewed. How many of the A-cup students were Orientals? Everybody knows that Orientals score A's on both the academic and bra-size front.

Oh yeah, although the report of the differing opinions was made public, it was not revealed if the answers were right

Some Notes on Touring, So Far
A love letter to LA, sort of

Growing up in Washington, DC in the shadow of government clampdown, there was really only one city in my imagination and that was New York, where I knew I'd escape to eventually. But then I needed to get further away and so I ended up in San Francisco (later I lived in New York, I did my time but it was too late; I mean New York was no longer New York—not for me, anyway). San Francisco and New York have a few things in common, and one of them is certainly a disdain for everything LA—strip malls, bikinis, tanning salons, 14 cars for every person—San Francisco and New York want to see themselves as so much more cultured, refined, defined by a mysterious urban sensibility that scoffs at the surface excess of the suburban while simultaneously cultivating it.

Like many mythologies, that of Surface LA is omnipresent, glorified and monstrous, horrifying in its audacity while reveling in so many challenges. Let me break it down, or I'll never get to what I'm supposed to be writing about—I hated LA before I had ever been there, and everything I hated about LA certainly presents itself in more ways than I could even imagine (in New York too—and San Francisco!) But the point right now is that I'm in LA, staring up at palm trees that are actually healthy or eating at a vegan Ethiopian restaurant or gasping once again, yes, again, that this huge expanse could actually be considered one city (or sure, gasping at what many call air), but the sheer volume of desires and the range of forces and territories and fissures breaks juxtapositions is also breathtaking in that way that feels like yes, breath again.

One of the reasons I've started to like some things about LA is my friendship with Jessica Hoffman, expansiveness through shared commitments to challenge and accountability and other beautiful things, and the people in LA she's introduced me to: Stephanie Abraham and Irina Contreras and an LA that is just like the dream of every other city thrown up against a wall and shattered too but also shattering chattering no more than that, an explosion looking for the parts.

I'm getting nowhere with all this

poetry, or no, somewhere but I'll never get there in time before driving back to San Francisco then three days to recover again so many more mornings waking up with my head blasted in, two months of travel hoping the beautiful moments can soothe me growing somewhere inspiration.

No I love the way this is proceeding, this writing thing that is.

I mentioned that the LA reading was phenomenal, but let me explain. I think more than any other reading yet, so many different perspectives styles of speech and differences among the readers interacting reacting glistening gorgeous. I mean there were so many times when I could've cried—I know I've said that before, and here I am again saying that once again I stopped myself, why? Yes, passing.

Yes, I love that the place was packed—and I do mean packed, as in standing all the way to the back—but also packed with a certain excitement about these intersectional politics of dissolution and disillusionment and deviance and defiance and disaster—if I could just live in that space all the time, yes give it to me! I mean give me to it.

Yes, I love words, especially these words as they're rolling I mean just give me these words... But sometimes just the words means lonely, in that room yes that packed room I felt something else like hope maybe, should I call it that? Hope that we can create something with the ruins—the ruins of ourselves, the ruins we're living in, the ruins we're creating—does that sound too bold? Not cold, that's what I like about it.

But back to the reading, Stephanie Abraham teasing us with the assimilation/non-assimilation success story then revealing what's underneath, then Dean Spade exposing gender regulation, Jennifer Blowdryer seducing us with over-enunciation satirizing medical diagnoses, Jessica Hoffman & Ruth Blandon & Irina Contreras as Vanessa Huang exploring the contradictions of the immigrant rights movement, Benjamin Shepard extolling the virtues of male-on-male lovelust maybe passing/not passing as queer, Jen Cross on surviving abuse and passing too well then choosing femininity after rejecting it as part of her stepfather's violence, finally Irina Contreras on what happens when you run into Code Pink in the bathroom of a museum where you work but today you're not working it's one of the big immigrant rights mobilizations.

Can you see how this combination couldn't fail to be explosive? People were quiet during the question-and-answer opportunity, until this great question about mentors and competition within activism and resistance, each of us went around to talk about this—many beautiful stories about friends and fellow contributors and inspiration from people who don't necessarily make it to the limelight and this was really thoughtful and splendid. Later my sister mentioned that it was also like everyone was maybe passing as not competing and I think that's true too although I'm also sure that we were creating something beyond that. The second question was a comment about how isn't it also true that everybody passes, and I loved that because yes, everybody passes and nobody passes and this book is about those places where we pass or fail to pass or refuse to pass and the interrelation of all of those experiences, bring it on.

My sister and I had a very stressful and not necessarily heartening maybe even hardening but also honest and explosive maybe cathartic conversation a day or was it two days before the reading which later I will talk about more but tonight she said maybe you don't hear this from anyone else in the family (you know, that family, the one that was supposed to give me what I needed but instead gave me what I needed to resist)—but my sister said I'm really proud of you because you're doing amazing and important work and that's when I was crying now too yes I'm crying and I love it.

A lightness in my eyes

Where I've been staying in Northeast Portland is historically a black neighborhood, but you wouldn't necessarily know that walking down the street past white hipster/yuppie bars and restaurants, so it was somewhat surprising when I stepped on the bus and noticed that everyone on the bus was black, and mostly kids too, from elementary school age to maybe late teens. One of the younger kids asked his friend what he thought of her (that's me), they were debating something and then the older kids said that's not a her, that's a dude—that's not a her—dudes can wear pink, too.

I liked the accidental use of the correct pronoun, but couldn't think immediately of the best way to support it so I just turned back and smiled. Later, I ran into a friend of mine from the Bay Area—she was working at the restaurant where I was eating—I like running into people I know from San Francisco in other places, an exciting warmth—or at least it can be that way. In this case, my friend ended up giving me that warmth and several amazing hugs and a free meal, something that I never see happening in San Francisco anymore—that's for sure. No one will even give you a break like sliding the produce through at the corporate health food store or counting four bunches of kale instead of six or whatever—I miss that kind of thing, it should be a given really but everyone's been worn out by gentrification and corporate loyalty and maybe just being worn out for so long too. Honestly, I also liked the way people stared when I walked down the street like I was an unusual spectacle—Portland is very hip, but it's also still a small town really.

Another incredible reading—I just hope they all stay this incredible! It was packed, all the seats filled and more added and then still standing room and sitting-on-floor room only. I can't believe I forgot my camera—I need one of those photos that shows the whole audience up to the podium, especially when it's so packed! Just to make me feel good, if nothing else—I like crowds, I mean crowds for my readings.

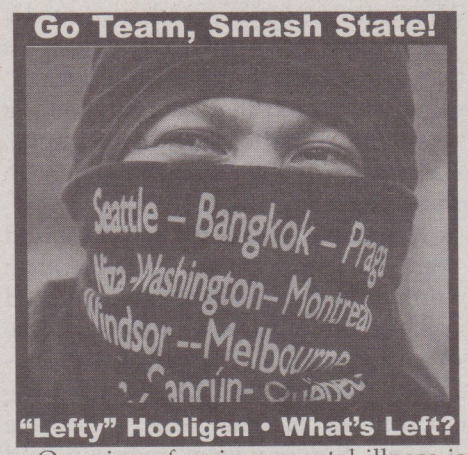
Anyway, this crowd was really wonderful—a few people here and there who I've known in other cities (San Francisco, Seattle), including some surprises, and also an intergenerational crowd, from people who grew up in the 40s and 50s down to the present—a lovely mixture of types and personal

styles of presentation, etc.

Jen Cross started, there was this intense presence of surviving sexual abuse right at the beginning, then Priya Kandaswamy's critique of the domestic violence prevention movement/industry, and Jennifer Blowdryer's story of how she got her SSI diagnosis. A lot of questions this time—about the psychiatric industry and whether it can help (unfortunately industries don't help, they only have their own needs to account for), depression (whether I struggle with it—of course!), vulnerability in my work (it's what helps me to feel safer), hopelessness (well, not in this moment), passing as a writer (because I talk about that jokingly in my intro), whether a certain degree of assimilation is healthy (never! that's why so many movements have failed), surviving abuse and expressing emotion and telling the truth (yes!), the connection between personal stories and political engagement/social change (I hope that's what these pieces are doing, starting from somewhere intensely personal and then taking on the world).

I have so much more to say, I mean these answers in parentheses are seriously abbreviating the discussion since actually every answer I gave went on for a while, I mean I had a lot to say so I'll tell you more later. This tour has already given me so much to think about, so much excitement and hope except of course there is still exhaustion and sinus headache heartache but also a lightness in my eyes.

Check out my new anthology, *Nobody Passes: Rejecting the Rules of Gender and Conformity*, and tell me what you think! You can also check in on me and my tour via my newish blog, http://nobodypasses.blogspot.com. The expanded second edition of *That's Revolting! Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation*, originally scheduled for October 2006, has been delayed—who knows when on earth it will arrive. I live for feedback, so send me love letters and/or delicious threats via <www.mattbernsteinsycamore.com>, which includes past *MRR* columns. Or write to PO Box 640047, San Francisco, CA 94164-0047.



One sign of serious mental illness is when an individual does the exact same thing over and over, each time expecting a different outcome.

Junior Bush militarily attacked Afghanistan in 2001, the first campaign in his international War on Terror. Lip-synching the neoconservative refrain that combating terrorism may require preemptive war, Bush applied the solution favored by his neocon advisors, regime change. The war was expected to be short, and result in a free, democratic and grateful Afghanistan. Today, and despite having ostensibly turned over military operations to NATO, the US accounts for over half of the 50,000 troops in the country that are fighting a Taliban guerrilla insurgency on the rebound. Acts of terrorism are on the increase throughout the region and Pakistan's western provinces are a de facto jihadist state. Expecting a spring offensive, the Pentagon moved a brigade of 3,200 soldiers originally destined for Iraq —the 173rd Airborne—to Afghanistan, according to a 2-14-07 *CNN* report. And the US is haranguing its NATO allies not just to commit more troops, but also to commit them to much more dangerous parts of Afghanistan.

The Numbnuts in Chief then invaded Iraq in 2003, round two of the War on Terror. Preemptive war and regime change in Iraq were expected to be a cakewalk according to most neoconservatives, with the citizens of that country greeting American troops as liberators, showering them with flowers and candy. Freedom and democracy in Iraq, in turn, were supposed to spread throughout the region, bringing about peace and an end to tyranny in the Middle East. Today, the 152,000-plus US soldiers in Iraq, in addition to 15,000 troops comprising Junior Bush's miniscule Coalition of the Willing, are ass deep in a Sunni jihadi insurgency, and a bloody civil war between Sunnis and Shias fueled by Shia dominance in the new national government. Iraq is on the brink of splitting into Sunni, Shia, and Kurdish mini-states, the entire region has been destabilized, terrorism is on the rise throughout the Middle East, and Iran appears to be the primary beneficiary of all of this. As I begin this column, the US House of Representatives has just passed a toothless, non-binding resolution condemning Junior Bush's 20,000 troop surge.

Rumor has it that, sometime this spring, the lesser Bush intends to follow the advice of various neoconservative pundits to launch the third installment of his War on Terror with a preemptive strike on Iran's nuclear facilities. "As cited by former CIA officer Philip Giraldi in the most recent edition of *American Conservative*, Bush's charges that Iran is supplying bombs to Shi'a militias to kill U.S. soldiers in Iraq; the seizure by U.S. forces of Iranian diplomatic and intelligence officials there; the deployment of two aircraft carrier groups with a flotilla of minesweepers to the Gulf; the supply of Patriot anti-missile batteries to Washington's allies in the region; the unprecedented appointment of a navy admiral and former combat pilot as the head of Central Command; the 'surge' of as many as 40,000 troops into Iraq; persistent reports of U.S. covert operations inside Iran—all suggest that Washington is preparing for a military confrontation, and soon." (Jim Lobe, "The Neo-Con Dog That Isn't Barking," *Inter Press Service*, Feb. 16, 2007)

Israel will be America's partner in this operation, if not its *avant garde*. A 2-19-07 *BBC* report claims that "US contingency plans for air strikes on Iran extend beyond nuclear sites and include most of the country's military infrastructure," including "Iranian air bases, naval bases, missile facilities and command-and-control centres." Neocon true believers have long insisted that the goal of such a military first strike must go beyond merely deterring

Iran's nuclear weapons development capabilities, all the way to regime change.

As I finish this column, Iran has not yet been attacked. I hope *MRR* readers are not witnessing US/Israeli military action against Iran as they read these words. By now it ought to be clear that a preemptive attack against Iran's nuclear facilities amounts to strike three in a disastrous foreign policy that cannot possibly bring peace, democracy, prosperity, or stability to Iran, let alone to the Middle East. If the idiocy of the neocons has prevailed however, let me offer a few predictions about the consequences of military action against Iran, just to see how close I come to the unfolding reality.

There will be tremendous collateral damage in Iran in the form of civilian deaths, property and infrastructure destruction, and radioactive pollution that will allow the country's theocratic hardliners to eliminate all opposition and consolidate their power. Iran's Shi'ite allies in Iraq will stage an uprising with Iranian arms and perhaps Revolutionary Guard intervention throughout the south that, with the Sunni insurgency in Anbar province, will drive US forces out of all but the Kurdish parts of Iraq. Moderate, pro-western Muslim regimes will be unwilling and unable to draw any distinction between American and Israeli foreign policies, and it will be assumed that they are identical by the entire Muslim world. Muslims worldwide will be outraged as the region between Lebanon's Mediterranean coast and Pakistan's autonomous western provinces descends into chaos, resulting in a dramatic increase in international terrorism against US, Israeli, Jewish, and Western targets. The international flow of oil will be severely disrupted, due to Iranian economic retaliation and Revolutionary Guard attacks on Persian Gulf shipping, bringing about a worldwide economic depression.

Is Junior Bush so mentally addled, or so much a tool of the neoconservatives, that he would risk even part of the above coming true? Are the neocons completely insane in their apocalyptic brinksmanship? It might be a bit more insidious than that. Joshua Micah Marshall first hit upon what's actually going on in his April 2003 *Washington Monthly* essay "Practice to Deceive," when he argued that far from being a nightmare scenario, chaos in the Middle East is what Bush and his neocon hawks have in mind.

The model here is the second World War and its aftermath, particularly in Europe. Then, an entire continent had collapsed into chaos as a consequence of savage warfare. The Western allies—France, Britain, and the US—used the opportunity of that chaos to reshape Europe. Borders were redrawn, old enmities as between France and Germany were buried, and authoritarian countries like Germany, the western part at least, were transformed into showcase democracies. Indeed, it was the successful democratization of both Germany and Japan after the war that is the cornerstone to the neoconservative delusion of democratizing the Middle East. Instead of seeing the widening instability in the region as evidence of some fundamental strategic bankruptcy, neoconservatives interpret the growing chaos as a vindication of their imperial designs, an affirmation of ur-neocon Leo Strauss's implied theory of "creative chaos." Indeed, the neocon recipe assumes that a whole lot of eggs will have to be broken in order to make this democratic omelet. Thus, Condoleezza Rice could oversee Israel's devastation of Lebanon and callously call it "the birth pangs of a new Middle East."

I needn't point out that Lebanon hasn't turned out the way Bush and Co. wanted either.

The notion that geopolitical collapse and international chaos will help facilitate the creation of a democratic Middle East makes about as much sense as hoping that the US remains bogged down in Iraq because the potential for imperial collapse and social chaos will make social revolution in this country that much more likely. Aside from the fact that both scenarios are against the interests of working people here and around the world, the proposition that a worthy future can be built upon mountains of corpses is extremely dubious. Unfortunately, mountains of corpses are all but guaranteed in the Middle East for the foreseeable future.

Recently, one neocon pundit after another revealed in *Vanity Fair* (11-3-06) that they believe Bush bungled Afghanistan, Iraq and Lebanon, that Bush didn't commit the manpower and resources to do the job right, that Bush compromised away their vision of democratic imperialism to traitorous State Department "realists," that Bush wanted to talk their talk but was unable to walk their walk. It's hard to sell the public on "creative chaos," so it's CYA time for the neoconservatives, who are now making excuses for why things didn't turn out quite the way they'd planned. Junior Bush may very well have been incompetent and done a half-assed job implementing the neocon agenda. Yet complete devotion to democratizing the Middle East would not have accomplished much more. As admirers of the influence wielded by the Roman Empire at its prime, neoconservatives have great difficulty accepting that the US has neither the troop levels, military strength, or imperial will to emulate ancient Rome.

If the neocons remain wedded to their delusions despite the facts, why then are they not more excited by the prospect of a military attack on Iran's nuclear capabilities sometime this spring? Journalist Jim Lobe writes that "[I]f an attack on Iran is on the near-term agenda, the neo-conservatives have been decidedly off-message. […] This tack may simply be a ruse to lull anti-war forces into complacency. Or it may reflect a fear that, given their record on Iraq, beating the drums for war with Iran may prove counter-productive […]. Or it may indicate that prominent neo-cons have somehow lost touch with the hawks in the White House and Cheney's office who are now determined to go to attack Iran this spring."

Whether the neocons are lying low so as not to attract undo attention to an imminent US/Israeli military strike on Iran, or perhaps know "that any such attack is still some time off, if it takes place at all" (per Jim Lobe), will be obvious by the time this issue of *MRR* officially hits the newsstands. I for one have no desire to count up how many of my predictions about the consequences

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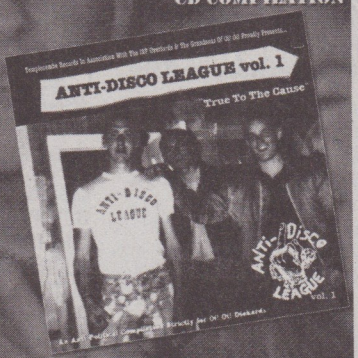

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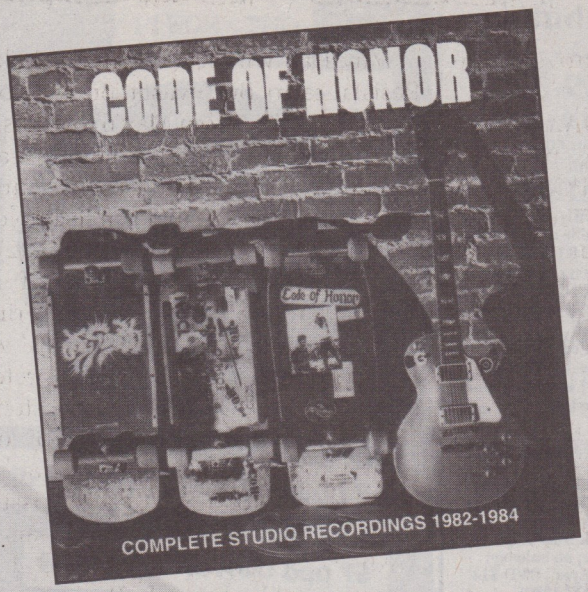

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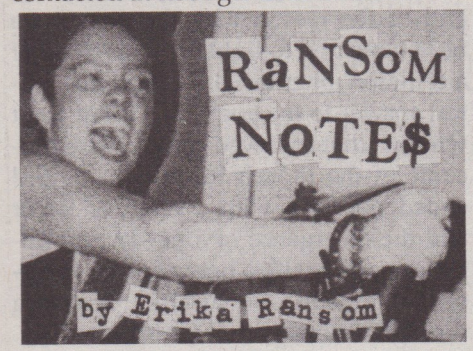


May Day

At the moment, writing this column at the beginning of March, I am in a whirlwind of my own creation, hardly enough time to sleep or breathe, pulled by all my projects seemingly all at once. I've been working on the Bay Area Anarchist Bookfair since last fall, a member of the infamous bookfair committee that a fellow columnist mentioned a couple of issues back. The event is next weekend, and every day it seems there are more emails to send out and things to do. (1)

I'm also trying to wrap up the more episodes of *Channel Zero*, editing and putting the first four shows on a DVD hopefully out this spring. This all squeezed in after work and volunteering, and finding time to go to a few shows and hang with a few friends. Things have become a blur, but the energy is high and I feel the power of Spring—an air of change and possibility.

I am also getting ready for my next great adventure, packing up and taking to the road again at the end of April.

This May Day I will be in Boston, and I'm really looking forward to seeing friends and the city again. How strange, that it will have been almost exactly a year since I last biked down Commonwealth Avenue, had a pint with Gretchen or saw a band in a dark and dusty basement in Allston. I can't wait!

May Day will also begin a "Week of Resistance to Biodevastation & Global Exploitation" as from May 6 to 9, Boston will be host to the world's largest yearly meeting of biotech and pharmaceutical executives, the annual Biotechnology Industry Organization convention (2). A few readers may recall one of my favorite Profits' songs, "Violent Fringe Against Biotechnology," which was dedicated to the anarchists who protested at another such meeting in Boston in 2000. Boston has a rich history of local organizing around environmental justice and environmental racism issues, such as fighting for cleaner air in Roxbury, a largely Black and low-income neighborhood. In Roxbury, children have a significantly higher rate of asthma than other parts of town, linked to the concentration of garbage sites, city bus depots and contaminated abandoned lots. One group I admire for their work since the early 90s is ACE (Alternatives for Community and Environment), which has brought together residents, lawyers, activists and youth to make positive changes and demand the right to a healthy environment.

In the middle of May, I will be on tour with the mighty Lucho and Outraged (3), going from Boston to Chicago, through Ohio and Michigan, and returning up the east coast from Pittsburgh, taking my camera, sunglasses and Profane Existence beer cozy along the way. Hopefully I'll be posting video clips to my site on a regular basis, depending on how much editing and uploading I can do while on the road. I'm looking forward to an American tour and seeing folks on the east coast, seeing how things have changed, and watching some great DIY political hardcore shows along the way.

With all this going on, my column is late again and I am sitting here at Bound Together on another cold Wednesday afternoon, sitting on a stool behind the counter, writing on my trusty laptop, listening to Carolyn kick ass once again on her punk rock radio show on KUSF. I turn the volume up, and think of May Day, and the wealth of books I am surrounded by. The column continues to write itself.

Many people have asked me, here at the store and elsewhere, "What is Anarchism?" I spent the afternoon looking over the shelves of books, in an attempt to answer this question for curious *MRR* readers new to the subject, and picked out a few excerpts to share (4).

Cheers and solidarity to everyone who resists oppression in all its forms, and this May Day, see you in the streets!

Lucy Parsons, *The Principles of Anarchism*

(Published as pamphlet circa 1905-1910.)

Anarchism: The philosophy of a new social order based on liberty unrestricted by man-made law, the theory that all forms of government are based on violence–hence wrong and harmful, as well as unnecessary.

Anarchy: Absence of government; disbelief in and disregard of invasion and authority based on coercion and force; a condition of society regulated by voluntary agreement instead of government.

Anarchist: 1. A believer in Anarchism; one opposed to all forms of coercive government and invasive authority. 2. One who advocates anarchy, or absence of government, as the ideal of political liberty and social harmony.

Alexander Berkman, *The ABC of Anarchism*

(First published in 1929.)

I want to tell you about Anarchism.

I want to tell you what Anarchism is, because I think it well you should know it. Also because so little is known about it, and what is known is generally hearsay and mostly false.

I want to tell you about it, because I believe that Anarchism is the finest and biggest thing mankind has ever thought of; the only thing that can give you liberty and well-being, and bring peace and joy to the world. But before I tell you what Anarchism is, I want to tell you want to tell you what it *is not*.

It is *not* bombs, disorder or chaos. It is *not* robbery and murder. It is *not* a war of each against all. It is *not* a return to barbarism or to the wild state of man. *Anarchism is the very opposite of all that.*

Anarchism means that you should be free; that no one should enslave you, boss you, rob you or impose upon you.

It means that you should be free to do the things you want to do; and that you should not be compelled to do what you don't want to do. It means that you should have a chance to choose the kind of a life you want to live, and live it without anybody interfering.

It means that the next fellow should have the same freedom as you, that every one should have the same rights and liberties. It means that all men are brothers, and that they should live like brothers, in peace and harmony.

That is say, that there should be no war, no violence used by one set of people against another, no monopoly and no poverty, no oppression, no taking advantage of your fellow-man.

In short, Anarchism means a condition or society where all men and women are free, and where all enjoy equally the benefits of an ordered and sensible life.

"Can that be?" you ask; "and how?"

"Not before we all become angels," your friend remarks.

Well, let us talk it over. Maybe I can show you that we can be decent and live as decent folks even without growing wings."

Emma Goldman, *Anarchism: What It Really Stands For*
(Published in 1910, republished in *Red Emma Speaks, an Emma Goldman Reader*)

Unfortunately there are still a number of people who continue in the fatal belief that government rests on natural laws, that it maintains social order and harmony, that it diminishes crime, and that it prevents the lazy man from fleecing his fellows.

It is difficult to ascribe to governments any capacity for order or social harmony. Order derived through submission and maintained by terror is not much of a safe guaranty; yet that is the only "order" that governments have ever maintained. True social harmony grows naturally out of solidarity of interests. In a society where those who always work never have anything, solidarity of interests is non-existent; hence social harmony is but a myth. The only way organized authority meets this grave situation is by extending still greater privileges to those who already monopolized the earth, and by still further enslaving the disinherited masses. Thus the entire arsenal of government–laws, police, soldiers, the courts, legislatures, and prisons–is strenuously engaged in 'harmonizing' the most antagonistic elements in society.

The most absurd apology for authority and law is that they serve to diminish crime. Aside from the fact that the State is itself the greatest criminal, breaking every written and natural law, stealing in the form of taxes, killing in the form of war and capital punishment, it has come to an absolute standstill in coping with crime. It has failed utterly to destroy or even minimize the horrible scourge of its own creation.

Crime is naught but misdirected energy. So long as every institution of today, economic, political, social, and moral, conspires to misdirect human energy into wrong channels; so long as most people are out of place doing the things they hate to do, living a life they loathe to live, crime will be inevitable, and all the laws on the statutes can only increase, but never do away with, crime. Direct action, having proven effective along economic lines, is equally potent in the environment of the individual. There a hundred forces encroach upon her being, and only persistent resistance to them will finally set her free. Direct action against the authority of the shop, direct action against the authority of the law, direct action against the invasive, meddlesome authority of our moral code, is the logical, consistent method of Anarchism.

Will it not lead to a revolution? Indeed, it will. No real social change has ever come about without a revolution. People are either not familiar with their history, or they have not yet learned that revolution is but thought carried into action.

Colin Ward, *Anarchism, A Very Short Introduction*
(Published 2004)

The word anarchy comes from the Greek *anarkhia*, meaning contrary to authority or without a ruler, and was used in a derogatory sense until 1840, when it was adopted by Pierre-Joseph Proudhon to describe his political and social ideology. Proudhon argued that organization without government was possible and desirable. In the evolution of political ideas, anarchism can be seen as an ultimate projection of both liberalism and socialism, and the differing strands of anarchist thought can be related to their emphasis on one or the other of these.

Historically, anarchism arose not only as an explanation of the gulf between the rich and the poor in any community, and of the reason why the poor have been obligated to fight for their share of a common inheritance, but also as a radical answer to the question, "What went wrong?' that followed the ultimate outcome of the French Revolution. It had ended not only with a reign of terror and the emergence of a newly rich ruling caste, but with a new adored emperor, Napoleon Bonaparte, strutting through his conquered territories.

The anarchists and their precursors were unique on the political Left in affirming that workers and peasants, grasping the chance that arose to bring about an end to centuries of exploitation and tyranny, were inevitably betrayed by the new class of politicians, whose first priority was to re-establish a centralized state power. After every revolutionary uprising, usually won at heavy cost for ordinary populations, the new rulers had no hesitation in applying violence and terror, a secret police, and a professional army to maintain their control.

For anarchists the state itself is the enemy, and they have applied the same interpretation to the outcome of every revolution of the 19th and 20th centuries. This not merely because every state keeps a watchful and sometimes punitive eye on its dissidents, but because every state protects the privileges of the powerful.

Albert Meltzer, *Anarchism: Arguments for and Against*
(Published 1996)

How will a Revolution come about?

We do not know. When a revolutionary situation presents itself, as it did with the occupation of factories in France in 1936 and 1968; as it did in Spain 1936 with the fascist uprising; or with the breakdown of the Russian Armies 1917; or in many other times and

places; we are ready for it or we are not (and usually not!). It may be a purely individual action that sets of the spark. But only if, at that period, there is a conscious movement towards a free society that throws off the shackles of the past, will that situation become a social revolution.

The problem today that faces us is that half the world is prepared to rise almost at any opportune time, but has no military power to resist oppression, and no industrial muscle to sustain itself. The other half of the world has such might, but no real desire to rise, being either bought off by capitalism or succumbing to persuasion.

Simon Read, *everything you ever wanted to know about anarchism, but were afraid to ask...*
(Published 2004)

How is a world without compulsion going to produce anything?

This is a world with potential. We have tremendous capacity, skills and strengths and yet at the moment our system doesn't even let us feed, clothe and house the world. All that productivity and yet what we have is poverty, hunger, fear, boredom and ignorance. People are thrown on a rubbish tip of unemployment and prevented from contributing because of the nature of a system that treats famine and wars as changes in the markets.

Let's say that everyone is entitled to the necessities of life, not because they have they buying potential, but because they are human beings. Forget money and the market. Forget the IMF and the G8. Forget the dirty stain on the earth that's modern industrialism. Forget that mass marketing of those calorie shocks to people who really don't need them.

Oh, come on. If people are housed and clothed why should they work at all?

Yes, people do try and minimize their work while maximizing their wealth and power. In today's alienated society you're sometimes pushed to act like that. Plus, people are sold this image as a modern survival strategy. If you're coming together voluntarily with people you know and want to work with, not only is this selfish behavior less likely to be tolerated, but you're less likely to want to behave like that.

Take away armies, governments, police, judiciary, prisons, managers, bosses, bureaucracy, advertising, insurance, junk food, dream consumerism and life-stylism, and you are left with a lot less non-productive work. If everyone had the necessities and the free choice, work could be about play, beauty and creativity. Expressing our humanity.

CrimethInc. Workers' Collective, *Days of War, Nights of Love*
(Published 2001)

Resurrecting anarchism as a personal approach to life.

Stop thinking of anarchism as just another "world order," just another social system. From where we all stand, in this very dominated, very controlled world, it is impossible to imagine living without any authorities, without laws or governments. No wonder anarchism isn't usually taken seriously as a large-scale political or social program: no one can imagine what it would really be like, let alone how to achieve it–not even the anarchists themselves.

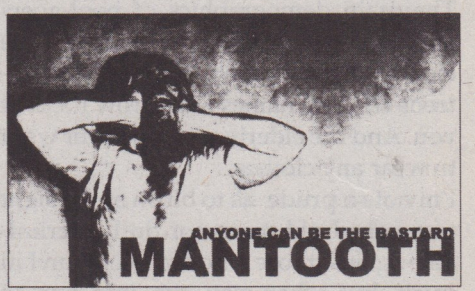
Instead, think of anarchism as an individual orientation to yourself and others, as a personal approach to life. That's not impossible to imagine. Conceived in these terms, what would anarchism be? It would be a decision to think for yourself rather than following blindly. It would be a rejection of hierarchy, a refusal to accept the "god given" authority of any nation, law, or other force as being more significant than your own authority over yourself. It would be an instinctive distrust of those who claim to have some sort of rank or status above the others around them, and unwillingness to claim such status over others for yourself. Most of all, it would be a refusal to place responsibility for yourself in the hands of others: it would be the demand that each of us not only be able to choose our own destiny, but also do so.

End Notes

1. Check out the website I made for the Bookfair, www.bayareaanarchis tbookfair.org. I'm excited by all of the speakers and great panels we'll have this year. See if you can find the photo of the *MRR* table with Chris and Paul from 2005, and me volunteering at the AK table last year, hung over from punk rock karaoke the night before. Good times! 2. You can find out more about the Reclaim the Commons gathering at www.indymedia.boston.org and http://rtc.revolt.org/boston07. I will be videotaping, daily posting clips of actions and interviews on IndyMedia and also on my site, www.channelzerosf.wordpress.com. Leave a comment if you check it out.

3. Outraged play fast hardcore with political lyrics. They rock! Listen to tunes at www.myspace.com/xoutragedx. See you on the road!

4. While most quotes are taken directly, edits were made for length, clarity and at my own whim for this column. If something grabs your attention, find the radical bookstore or infoshop nearest you and read more. These quotes are only meant to give you a few ideas. Just as no single mix tape can explain what punk sounds like, my brief list of quotes leaves out so many authors and ideas about anarchism that I want to include, but you'll have to discover those gems yourself. Now, I've reached the end of this column, and the end of this day. After my bookstore shift I went directly to work and then finally home again, the whirlwind ending now at 2 am, my energy gone. I am listening to Zounds and Mission Street is quiet. I think of the sound of wheels on pavement, the lure of the road calling for the summer. But at this moment, I am here, still in love with SF, and say dear friends, goodnight.



Fiction: As a lifeguard, you must be very responsible.

Fact: If you are currently looking for a job that perfectly fits your lifestyle/deathstyle of eschewing responsibility, might I suggest a career in lifeguarding? A few years ago, I

found myself in this same exact situation: young, brazenly lazy, and stuck at my parents' house for the summer. The job, like most, fell into my lap by chance. Normally, I would have turned my nose up at anything that requires me to expose my fair skin to harmful UV rays and actually *save* human lives instead of condemning them to their own deadly stupidity. In this case, though, I honestly can't remember why I chose to become a lifeguard. It probably had something to do with money and the chance to scope some totally hot chicks or something or other, *bro*.

Fiction: As a lifeguard, you are expected to save lives and become a hero of the community.
Fact: As a lifeguard, I spent more time fishing turds out of the baby pool than drowning victims. This actually wasn't so bad. At the YMCA where I worked, we rotated positions every 15 minutes. So when some kid inevitably unloaded gallons of dirty brown dishwater, we would have to shut down that pool for an hour or two. This would cause a lag in the rotation, so I could sit in the pool house eating freezie pops and playing Gameboy. In fact, I never once had to enter the water to rescue someone. I probably sat on my ass more as a lifeguard than ever as an office jockey.

Fiction: As a lifeguard, you get to scope some totally hot chicks or something or other, *bro*.
Fact: If you're thinking that being a lifeguard will open the fleshy gates of the ass kingdom, you are horribly mistaken. The main demographics of pool-goers are as follows: babies, pre-teens, and the elderly. The babies shit all day. The pre-teens call you names and throw rocks at you. And the elderly seem to never want to wear any clothes.
I'm not so prude as to blush at the sight of a naked old man, nor do I discriminate against those who are freer than I in spirit, but when you run into one of these nudist thugs in the locker room, it's never with a towel slung on his shoulder saying "wazzup" to you, but always bent over at a right angle trying to tie his shoes. Why is he tying his shoes without any pants on? And why do so many of them traipse about the locker room in nothing but a t-shirt and socks? Who taught these men how to dress themselves? I weep for their children who will propagate generation after generation of fools who cannot dress themselves in a logical way.
I used to be much more irate about this subject, but over the years I've come to sympathize with these old, naked dudes. Most cowards (Christians) I know tremble with fear at the thought of getting older. "Boo hoo," I can hear them bemoan, "I cannot bear the ghastly image of the withered, feeble shell of my former self creaking and shuffling underneath the fluorescent lights of some dilapidated convalescent home." While I similarly have no desire to spend my final days having my keester wiped by surly and sassy orderlies, I also have no fear of the Mantooth that is yet to come and am determined to escape such a fate. See, I welcome life as an elderly 'tooth.
I won't be "punk" by any stretch of the imagination. I will just be a fucking piece of shit old guy with no regard to your sense of personal space or dignity. I will make it the explicit mission of my "golden years" to be a fucking pain the ass in every aspect of your existence. I will come into your place of employment completely naked, bending over this way and that, and demanding an outrageous caliber of service and respect from you. If you think this sounds unabashedly punk rock, I assure you it will not be.

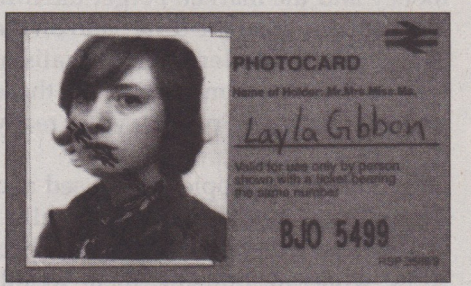
Fiction: Lifeguards are respectable members of civil society.
Fact: Lifeguards are despicable cretins who would not pass up the chance to let you drown and piss on your water-logged corpse and then brag about it to all his or her friends.

Fiction: Lifeguards are amongst the fittest and most athletically able specimens in the animal kingdom.
Fact: I am a pathetic mess—why or how I was ever certified to save lives is beyond my comprehension. I am a spindly shadow of a man, a prime candidate for a future position as a frail and shaking old fart. I did not partake in morning laps with fellow guards. Instead I would fashion a cozy bed in the pump-room out of emergency flotation devices and go to sleep.
What I lack in muscles, I make up for in determination. That's right. I'm like a fucking Disney movie. I might be skinny and pale, but I've got *heart*. Like the fucking dickens I do. As I've stated before in this column, I do not have a driver's license. Nor have I ever. I've never even been behind the wheel of an automobile. The reasons are shrouded in secrecy and shame, so let's just never mind them all together. So I would ride my bike five miles to and from the YMCA every day. While that may elicit many a scoffing from those big tough peoples who ride their bikes into apocalypse, with their greasy dreadlocks flapping defiantly in the face of *society*, let me elaborate on what I mean by "bike." Over the course of this summer, I went through about four bikes. Each one comically disassembled itself while I was riding, sending me careening into traffic. So eventually, my friend Ho built me a bike that he swore would hold up.
What he built me was a BMX bike with sissy bars.

Fact: A man once insisted that I engage him in a match of fisticuffs because I told him that he could not drink a beer in the pool.
Fiction: I shot and killed that man as a lesson to others.

Fact: I asked him to leave the pool facility. And he did.

gregory.mantooth@gmail.com



I am *fully pumped on things right now!* Really psyched! Who knows why; having spent an age in hibernation (which includes walking out to the beach by myself two or three times a week, through the park or the Sunset District listening to Chris Bell solo/Die Kreuzen and suddenly, things turn into

the last song on the Void side of the Void/Faith split. EXPLODE!!!! It's one of the traumatic things about being an underachieving person who overanalyzes things; very little gets done but a lot gets observed and enjoyed/dismissed. Things that have been enjoyed—the weird vegan hot dog stand out on Irving and 18th. Also, the jasmine tea ice cream at the place at 38th and Noriega. Mostly coffee, the ocean, the trees through the fog and *Cows and Beer*, really.

Other things that are firmly in the Kicks Affirmative camp:

Barr live! And Marnie Stern. Totes magical humans for sure... One of the things that kind of bugs me about the noise/art damage world is the endless bogus positivity. The most cynical hateful people will suit up with this posi-hippie guise, when it's totally obvious they hate life and good times and are squeezed into too-tight neon green ironic clothing that is affecting their will to live. I mean my band plays in this context—Oakland bus shows and art galleries rather than crust crusader warehouses and scabies basement scenes. So I am involved and interested in things musically outside of the minutiae of Kangrena 7"s and Black Flag Target vids or whatever... I think it might actually be the concept of "scene" that creeps me out. I like being around people who are consumed by the things I am also obsessed with, but just because some kid skates and listens to, um, the 13th Floor Elevators doesn't mean they are on my team. (This I discovered when I moved to Orange County when I was 21-ish to look after my grandmother. After a lifetime of fantasizing about living in California and skating with like-minded dorks, the realization that most skaters in California were straight-up jock boredom machines was a little disarming. Also, the OC blows chunks.) This all relates to the Barr and Marnie Stern tour because these are definitely not *MRR*-sanctioned artistes, but both demonstrate genuine, non-artificial-flavored radness. Seeing Marnie shred on her guitar; just the sense of wonder and the lack of constraints made me think of a girl reclaiming that sound from the likes of the Fucking Champs or Lightening Bolt or whatever and removing all the irony and dudeness and making it about newness and nowness. Not retro douchebag '70s moustache land, but some other thing I can't exactly explain. Barr was a band this time, and that was totally grade-A, uplifting, non-patronizing feel-good times also. I like how Brendan can totally disarm a room, totally blow people away or make them want to fight him. I know the readers of this magazine are probably against it, but I am pro-team Barr times 3000.

Re-reading *Absolute Beginners* by Colin Macinnes, which you should totally read. I got it from bookmooch.com. (Free book trades! Sign up.) Anyway, it's London in the '50s; the first spark of life and youth after the Second World War. MacInnes captures London, particularly West London where I was born and raised, with such vigor and force! Read it—it'll totally make you understand Paul Weller circa The Jam so much more, particularly the dreamier songs like "Life from a Window." Mod fuck explosion! It is kind of trashy pulp fiction I know, but so evocative and if you are obsessed with youth subcultures you will heart it. I haven't seen the film they made of it in the '80s, but I am sure it's lousy.

Ramones! Still the most romantic band in the history of time. Golnar says: late-80s Ramones (I don't wanna be buried in a pet cemetery, etc., etc.), I say: I wanna be yr boyfriend? Today your love? C'mon.

Anne Briggs and the Ethan Swan explanation of folk being like punk; how one record leads to another, from Nick Drake to Bert Jansch to Anne Briggs and Wizz Jones to to to etc. etc. etc. just like Minor Threat tape to *Flex Your Head* to *The Kids Will Have Their Say* or Necros or whatever. I like that part of being a record nerd, the paths and diversions. I am totally obsessed with Irma Thomas, and my favorite Irma Thomas record was one produced and mostly written by one Jerry "Swamp Dogg," that led me to Doris Duke, also produced by Swamp Dogg. The record's called *I'm a Loser*, and is one of the harshest soul records you've ever heard, with a song about the local mill closing, resulting in the unemployment of the song's protagonist, resulting in said protagonist singing said song from a hotel room bed waiting for her next customer... Anyway, Doris Duke was one of Nina Simone's backing singers and so on it goes! I have found a couple of Swamp Dogg's own records in thrift stores, but none have hit as hard as Irma's *In Between Tears* or *I'm a Loser*, but maybe he has good 45s or somethin? Much like punk rock and hardcore, soul and r'n'b are 7" genres.

Die Kreuzen!! I am not sure if I have already talked about this, but dude, I wish someone had played me fucking *Cows and Beer* when I was a teenager! I only heard late-era Die Kreuzen which is muchly unremarkable to these ears, thusly I avoided this band. But *Cows and Beer* is exactly the kind of brain wreckage I like. And the first LP? HOLY SHIT!! Seriously; the teenage genius soundtrack till the end of time.

Golnar is totally abandoning San Francisco, so I will have no one to talk about Really Red *and* Huggy Bear. It is so rare to meet a fellow female music nerd who is obsessed with more than one genre of music, and can authoritatively talk of Finnish hardcore, 90s Olympia-based girl punk and late 70s Swell Maps-inspired DIY punk. Who also knows the words to Creedence and the fuckin Ronettes. Her abandoning ship is a total total shitsystem, but I am gonna try and be philosophical and uh, make some remark about how life goes on and how most of my closest friends live on the wrong coast or continent, and part of the magical-ness of punk is the fact that you can maintain the brodyssey over mass distances no sweat. Right?

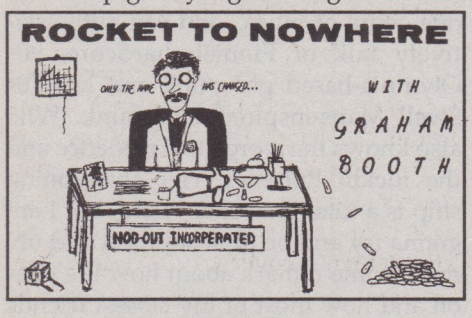
Maybe I too should abandon ship? Except I live rent-controlled in a rad neighborhood in one of the most expensive cities in the world, which I love. I don't feel super affiliated with the culture or humans here necessarily, but the place itself is so dreamy. I mean mountains and oceans, Mission punk shows and Oakland noise bus shows. One of my favorite things about SF is obviously *MRR*, I like how it's a collection of total miscreants and weirdos, not a cohesive scene. A lot of people who do shitwork here probably haven't been to a punk show in years, a lot go to a cou-

ple a week or month. Whatever. The point is it isn't a cohesive unit but a mass deformity that somehow functions and creates despite its failings and endless imminent disasters. One of my favorite feelings is being in my room on my own in a full house, and I kind of feel the same way about the punk scene here. Like I could go to a show, and see my friends, or people I vaguely know from *MRR* but the scene isn't all there is. I am not sure if that makes any sense at all. It's just a rad feeling having the possibility of punk every week, and one most punks are not privvy to and I know I take it for granted...

Pizza is always in my top ten. Whatevers to the pizza snobs who disregard non-NY-based pizza. Go to Zachary's in Oakland, Arizmendi in SF, and more importantly, Serrano's in the Mission for late night slices. Good times.

What else is good? I am going to England in June for the first time in four years which will be hopefully a druid-filled stone circle of a good time.

'Off the pigs. layla.gibbon@gmail.com



What a month! It all started literally one day after I wrote my last column. I'd been ruing my inability to make it to my local thrift stores at lunchtime. That day, despite already having taken a long lunch, I made it a point to "squeeze" in a trip to one of my favorite digs near work. When I got there, one of the employees was slowly emptying the contents of a newly dropped off box of albums into any and all open spaces in the store bins. Sensing my frustration—or maybe it was the *loud* clearing of my throat—she grabbed one last large pile and dumped it on top of a different box to make way for me to get down to business.

I recognized a lot of the crap from previous trips, and it appeared that the new arrivals were mostly '70s disco 12s. I started building a small pile of my usual weird records, flipping through LPs when I spotted a sleeveless 45 lurking in the middle of it all. A familiar black with silver ink label stared up at me: THE NEXT Monotony/Cheap Rewards on (Sharp Records)! Unreal. One of the rarer Texas punk singles, and a stone cold classic at that! You can imagine I didn't leave any records unturned that day. Sadly (?!?) that was all I came up with on the day...still, not too shabby, finding a Texas punk record in LA.

If you haven't already heard THE NEXT, and you don't have $150 to drop on an original copy (or a few months to wait for one to turn up), I would highly recommend seeking out the tracks from this, their first EP called *Make It Quick*, from 1979. At this juncture, the best track for me, and it's a hard one to choose, would be "Cheap Rewards" making its first compilation appearance on the *Blood Stains Across Texas* LP. Here, they up the DILS on their "hate the rich" concept with a decidedly less spazzy yet all the more earnest approach.

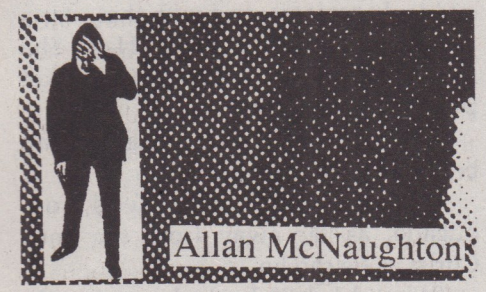
The equally great "Monotony" would later surface on the *Killed By Death* series, therein upping the spazz ante significantly. The compilers of the world then did us all a favor by releasing all three tracks on the *Deep In The Throat of Texas* compilation. All three aforementioned compilations are well worth picking up, but by now you can no doubt download these tracks in MP3 format somewhere online. THE NEXT also released an ultra-rare though reportedly quite awful follow-up 7" single, as well as appearing on the *Live at Raul's* compilation LP with a more mature '80s rootsy college rock sound. Interesting, but not for the $25+ most sellers are usually peddling it for. I found a copy years ago for $3.99, and I couldn't bring myself to keep a copy even at that price...

So just when I thought the record gods had filled my monthly quota, a week later I found my first record from Bolivia at another thrift store about a mile away. I'm embarrassed to admit that prior to finding it, I couldn't have located Bolivia on a map. Well, looking at a map, Bolivia appears to be the donut hole of South America's donut. There it is, smack dab in the middle, with borders touching Brazil, Paraguay, Argentina, Chile and Peru! About all it doesn't touch are the oceans, and I suspect its landlocked-ness may be one of the reasons why it's historically one of the most oppressed regions in South America.

Nowadays there is a vibrant punk/hardcore scene in Bolivia, but I couldn't tell you the first thing about 15 to 20 years ago (time to break out the old *MRR* scene reports!) I haven't heard any recordings from '80s Bolivian punk groups, but the record I found came from an earlier era. The four-song 7" EP I found came from LOS GRILLOS (The Crickets) and was released circa 1973 with a great full-color group shot on the cover. They were apparently one of the more prolific Bolivian rock groups of that era, starting in the late 60s and continuing on with several releases into the '70s. One of their early singles, "La Tarara" from 1968 has been compiled on several South American garage/psych compilations, most recently on the 2003 *Psicofasicos de Bolivia* LP/CD, featuring 14 different Bolivian bands from the late '60s. I need to find me a copy! I was shocked to read that one of the bands, GRUPO 606, is notorious for having to build their own instruments just to be able to play...it takes the meaning of DIY to a whole nother level! Do we ever have it easy!

So back to LOS GRILLOS...it's hard to know what to expect from any '70s group billed as "psychedelic" or "garage," especially coming from South America, but any notions of crazed acid rock were immediately put to rest (unlike the SABBATH inspired GRUPA CIRUELA from Mexico whom I wrote about several columns ago). I don't know what LOS GRILLOS' '60s material sounds like, but by the mid '70s, they had a more understated beat / folk-rock sound going. My pick here is their track "Quiero Que Me Quieras" with psychedelic fuzz-drenched guitar flourishes, especially during the final break. I found a "Best Of" CD being offered on eBay...sadly this track didn't make their cut. It's sad to think this is very likely the first and last record from Bolivia I will ever have the pleasure of finding

"in the wild" Must... keep... digging... until next month...



Claws.

There's a cat living in my house just now. She's not allowed out, she's an indoor cat. She's been de-clawed, so even if she did go out she doesn't have the tools to defend herself. She is always trying to make a break for it though. You have to be careful not to leave the door open too long when you're coming or going. It's a terrible shame. She sits at the window and looks at the exciting world outside. Birds, squirrels, dogs, other cats. It's almost cruel to show her the freedom she's missing. She retains some of her natural instincts though. She paws at the furniture—in her imagination I'm sure she's shredding it with phantom claws. At night she goes on the prowl, padding from room to room on the trail of imaginary prey.

I watch her and I feel a common bond. We're all a little like de-clawed cats. We sense there is something better out there, but at some point along the line someone closed the door on us and took away our ability to defend ourselves. Or maybe we willingly gave it up in exchange for the comforts of domesticity.

Heroes.

From an early age I wanted to be a cartoonist. I read the comics in the paper every day, and used to check out collections of cartoons from the library. I used to draw all the time, copying popular characters and trying to come up with my own. I managed to get a couple of cartoons in school newspapers and such but my own efforts were always unoriginal and derivative. Still, I could adequately recreate all the greats and was always getting requests for Popeye, Snoopy, etc. As a youngster, the Peanuts cartoons were far and away my favorite. I would get completely swept up in their world, devouring collection after collection of Charlie Brown strips. Naturally, I related to Charlie Brown: the morose, awkward, and unpopular, but reliable, down-to-earth, nice-guy hero of the comics. The funny thing is, I think everyone relates to Charlie Brown in some way. Isn't that the key to the strip's massive and enduring popularity?

The point of all this is to somehow illustrate what a hero Charles M. Schulz was to the youthful McNaughton. As time went by and I got older other interests took over. As you can probably tell, I never became a cartoonist. But I remained a fan of Peanuts all along. One time after I had moved to California, I read in the paper that he actually lived just an hour or two North of here. The article talked about the ice rink he built so that the kids in his adopted hometown of Santa Rosa would have the opportunity to enjoy skating and hockey as much as he had as a boy in Minnesota. Apparently he often ate breakfast in the cafe attached to the ice rink. I always told myself that one of these days I was going to go up there and meet my childhood hero face to face. I'd read that he was a fairly private person, but all I wanted to do was shake his hand and thank him for the years of pleasure.

Of course, you've probably guessed where this was going. I never did get around to going up to Santa Rosa and trying to meet the great man, and in February 2000, he passed away. I was too late.

Today I finally did make that trip, to visit the Schulz Museum that was built to celebrate his life and work. There were some great original cartoons on display, as well as Peanuts-inspired works from many other famous artists. One of the highlights for me was the recreation of his studio. The room had his desks laid out with work on them, as if he'd just stepped out moments before. The shelves are lined with what I imagine were his books. On one shelf sits a nice turntable with a Brahms LP on it, ready to play (or just finished). I couldn't help but check out the small selection from Sparky's record collection that sat next to the turntable. Among the jazz and classical sat two Buck Owens LPs and the Best Of ABBA. I couldn't picture Charles Schulz sitting there sketching away to the strains of "Knowing Me, Knowing You," but it probably happened.

Demons.

I never thought I'd see the day. But when Empress Carolyn informed me that the one and only Roky Erickson was going to be performing at this year's Noise Pop festival in San Francisco, I knew I had to secure a ticket as soon as they went on sale. In the 12 years I've lived in the Bay Area, I think this is the first time I've actually attended a Noise Pop event. It's just never appealed to me—usually the headliners are big time indie rock acts that I don't care about. If, by some bizarre instance of mate-rock nepotism actually coinciding with decent musical taste and a band I like makes it into the lineup, I would generally prefer to see them the next time they play, when the ticket price isn't $25 and the venue isn't full to bursting with "industry" bottom-feeder laminate monkeys.

Anyway, I digress... Roky Erickson. I was not cool enough to be rocking out to the 13th Floor Elevators in my nappies. I first heard Roky after my mate Angus (as mentioned a few columns ago) heard me listening to the Minutemen's cover of "Bermuda" (as recorded over the telephone) and told me what it was. I dispatched myself to his record collection forthwith and taped all the Roky records he had. I've been a fan ever since, but after reading up on a bit of Roky's bizarre history, I'd long given up on the possibility of ever seeing him live. Even after I started hearing about his sporadic performances in his hometown of Austin, it seemed unlikely that he'd get a full-time band together again and go out on tour. Well, he did, and am I glad. Roky Erickson brought the house down at San Francisco's Great American Music Hall the other night, and while the set list wasn't my dream collection of hits from his back catalogue, I was in no way disappointed. When he and the band kicked in to "Starry Eyes," the smile on my face was splitting me in half. He

didn't say much up there; he looked a little bewildered by the adulation at times, but he managed some decent guitar shredding and his singular voice was in strong, if not perfect, form.

I saw many familiar faces in the audience that night, as well as many more I'd never seen before, but by the end of the show they all shared the same elated expression. It almost felt like we'd all witnessed a miracle. In a way maybe we had. From the sounds of things, Roky Erickson has all but recovered from decades of mental illness, and is back to share his music with us for good. Let's hope.

Bermuda/The Interpreter singles and signed, original Peanuts strips to: PO Box 22971, Oakland, CA 94609. Email me at allan@dropout.cc. Columns are archived on my blog at www.dropout.cc (now RSS-enabled!).

For more background on the strange tale of Roky Erickson you can visit some of the many excellent websites that exist, or you can wait for the release of the new documentary on his life, *You're Gonna Miss Me.* For the record, I am against de-clawing cats. But at least she won't kill any songbirds...

"The kids just keep getting younger and younger," I remark to my friend Yoav, who plays guitar in the band Charm School. I also make the same remark to Big George, who plays guitar in the band Heap. Both bands rock my world and both are from New York.

"Uh huh," says big George, as we watch Mickey Leigh talk about his and Joey Ramone's mom at a dinner in her honor.

"I mean, they're like sperm," I say to Big George, who almost spits whiskey out his nose.

"You're fucking right," he laughs.

But I'm not laughing. And not because we are remembering Mickey's mom; she always made me laugh. It was because of that show in San Diego.

A few years back.

Evan, my bass player, sees the look on my face and asks what's wrong. I make him remember.

Remember that we hate the kids.

*

"Dude," yells Todd, the singer of F.Y.P. and owner of the house we are staying at, "get out of here now!"

I look at Todd, with his black knit cap pulled over his boyish bleached-blonde hair, and shrug my shoulders.

"Dude," he repeats, "she's the anti-Christ. Run away!"

I look at everyone else in Todd's living room. There is Julie, Todd's girlfriend, with the jet-black hair and cool tattoos, who looks like Drew Barrymore. In a good way. Then there are Sean and Joe, drummer and bass player of F.Y.P.

Also seated in the room are Michael and Evan, drummer and bass player of Furious George, and a couple of people from the Pedro crew.

Pedro.

That's what they call San Pedro in Pedro.

They also have other terms there.

Like "Rhea."

That's what ya get from eating too much Taco Bell, drinking too much, or living on the Evan diet.

Then there's "Don."

A Don, actually.

A Don is what you get when you wake up in the morning. Or when you see a pretty girl.

Short for hard-on. People in Cali like to shorten their words.

"George," says Todd, "this is the last time I'm gonna tell you. That little girl who just walked in here is bad news. Run away."

I look at who Todd is talking about. It is a little girl with red hair who just walked in the front door. In her pajamas. She's adorable in a Pippi Longstockings sort of way.

"Hey, little girl," I say to the girl, who appears to be around eight or nine. "Want a Furious George tattoo?"

I reach into the front/side pocket of my women's stretch jeans and pull out a temporary tattoo. It's the Furious George monkey.

"I hate tattoos, and I hate you," she suddenly screams, and with that, starts punching the hell out of me. Hard. She hits me with uppercuts, breadbasket punches, and everything.

"What the hell?" I manage to say before I am hit in the mouth.

"I warned you," shouts Todd from outside, as far away from the anti-Christ as he can be.

"What'd I do?" I asked everyone in the room.

The only one to answer me is Julie and Todd's dog, Buster. A female chihuahua. She starts to have an asthma attack and makes funny noises. When Evan asks what's wrong with the dog, Julie says the dog, when excited, gets these attacks.

So, as the dog continues to gasp for air, this little girl starts to go to town on me. Punches everywhere. Finally she kicks me in the nuts so hard I double over and fall on the floor. Gasping like the dog.

"What? What did I do?" I squealed.

The little girl, standing over me with her flowing red hair, the color of the River Styx's flames, tells me. Then she sucks her thumb. And all I can think is, "I hate the kids."

*

When I asked Todd if we could tour with F.Y.P out on the west coast some years back, I thought it was a great idea. I imagined meeting Heather Locklear, Pamela Anderson Lee, Anna Nicole Smith, or any look-alike or wannabe. It didn't matter. Blonde hair. Big fake tits. That was California. In my mind. But the real thing was a bit different.

I thought all this as I was packed into F.Y.P's van with seven other guys on the way down to San Diego, the second day of our tour. The night before we had played in L.A. at some shithole called the Anti-Club. It made the Continental look like Radio City Music Hall. And this night we were due to play someplace called The Showcase Theater.

"Ya ready to rock?" asked Rall, the merchandise guy for both F.Y.P and Furious George.

His real name was Raul. But every-

one called him Rall. When I asked him why they called him "Rall," he told me because stupid Californians can't pronounce "Raul." So Rall stuck.

"I dunno," answered Evan from on top of the van's loft, "I don't feel so well. Maybe it was the Cheetos or Combos or..." and with that, he let out a real loud cough, followed by some choking noises, then a loud cough again, where he spit up a bunch of snot.

"Anyone got a tissue?" he asked.

We all laughed, but tried not to let him hear us.

But I think he did.

Two and a half to three hours later we arrived in San Diego. As we drove around looking for the club, we discussed nicknames.

"They call me "Chief Swoop n' Cuddle," explained Rall, "because I'm half Mexican and half American Indian."

"And because he swoops in on chicks with his good looks and then cuddles with them like a teddy bear," explains Joe from F.Y.P, whose nickname is Stoots.

"Why Stoots?" I ask Joe.

"It's like this," explains Todd, who is driving the van, and everyone starts to roll their eyes.

"What's going on?" I ask Sean.

"Todd's gonna tell one of his stories. Oh no."

Todd turns down Weezer on the boombox and goes into his story.

"Well, George, Stoots got his name because, well, because he used to race slot cars."

Everyone except Evan, Michael, and me moans.

"You see," continues Todd, "Joe used to race slot cars. But then he started to cut them up into tiny pieces. And then he ground them into powder."

"Uh, oh," Michael and I say at the same time.

"Then, with the powder, he made heroin. Which he sold to other slot car racers. So then Joe became the big time dealer to all the slot car guys in Southern California and they gave him the name Stoots. Pronounced like it is spelled. And same forwards as it is back."

"Is there any point to this story?" asks Stoots, annoyed.

"Absolutely none," says Todd.

We all laugh.

Well Michael, me, and Evan, anyway.

"You guys got nicknames," asks Rall.

"Well," I say, "Michael likes to be called Larry Fishcorn, and..."

"And Party Boy Curtis," blurts out Michael.

When I ask Michael why he likes to choose real first names, he tells me, because he just likes to.

Drummers.

"And they call me Hitler," I add, "or Das Fuhrer George, or Herr Tabb, I think because they think I'm a control freak. Which I'm not. And by the way, Todd, turn down the stereo and find the club soon. I gotta piss."

When someone asks what Evan's nickname is we get silent. Evan doesn't like nicknames. He's told me this on many occasions. So I don't push it. He'd kick my ass. He is hewhocannotbenicknamed.

We arrive at the club and pull into its parking lot. A few kids are already outside, lined up to buy tickets. It is at least two hours before doors open.

"We're here," yells Stoots, and flings open the van's side door. We all pile out, along with hewhocannotbenicknamed's snotty tissues, some cigarette butts, and empty Gatorade and beer cans.

I take a look around. San Diego. Factories, more factories, and in the distance, boats.

"Is the whole town like this?" I ask Todd.

"Well," explains Todd, "San Diego used to be a cool town. In fact, the city originated back in the early times of America, and..."

"And don't listen to Todd," says Rall. "This part of town is the shitty district. There are real nice houses elsewhere."

"Oh," is my reply.

Eventually someone from the club shows up and we get to unload the van. We move all our equipment into the club, which is fucking huge. There is a large dance floor in front of the stage, as well as balconies to each side and a huge outdoor patio and large backstage area. We'd feel comfortable in the place if we were the Rolling Stones.

"I'm hungry," says hewhocannotbenicknamed, and we all moan in agreement.

"Let's go to that kid's house and eat free pizza," I say.

"Good idea," says Todd. "We love the kids."

The kid we are talking about is Gilbert.

Gilbert lives in San Diego.

Along with his pal Josh.

Who also lives there.

They both let me know they lived there about one thousand times. Over the internet.

It started innocently enough. Them emailing me, asking if they could get on the guest list. It turned into them inviting my whole band over for a pizza dinner.

Then it turned into Gilbert's uncle, who owns a brewery, brewing us our own keg.

Then it turned into a massive sleepover party.

Then it turned into a massive sleepover party with the guests having to be gone at 8:30 a.m. because Gilbert and family had to go to church.

Then it turned into "We'll see you at the show."

Now it was back to the pizza.

As we rode in the van towards Gilbert's house, we saw many suburban houses, all of which looked very nice. We also saw lots of Mexicans.

"There are lots of beaners around here," I say to Rall, "where are the hooknoses?"

"We are right near Mexico," answers Chief Swoop n' Cuddle.

"Aren't there Mexican Jews?" I ask. "You know, they wear tortillas on their heads."

No one laughs.

Californians.

We continue to look for Gilbert's house. He told us there is a large dinosaur in the front yard.

Kids.

And party balloons.

Whatever.

We are just looking for the right street.

We drive around the neighborhood Gilbert told us he lives in, and can't seem to find his house. Suddenly Stoots sees some balloons, and I hear Sean say

"Holy shit!"

We look at the house Sean is looking at. There is a large dinosaur in the front yard. It is taller than the house.

We park the van across the street from the house and Stoots opens the side door. We all pile out, along with hewhocannotbenicknamed's tissues, some cigarette butts, empty bottles, and Aaron, my pal from California, who we met up with at the Showcase.

"OK, George," says Todd, "these are your pals, you go say hello to them first."

"Umm," I stammer, "maybe we should leave. Those kids playing in the front yard look awfully young, and I'm afraid of dinosaurs in San Diego. I just saw *Lost World*, ya know."

"Fuck you, then," says a couple of the guys, and they walk towards the house. I start to follow.

As I approached Gilbert's house, everything started to go into slow motion. Even sound. I felt like the bionic man.

"Geeeeeooooorrrrggggeeeeee!!!!!!" some kid yells to me as I slowly cross the road. He is wearing a black t-shirt, and has a very friendly face. I guess he is Josh. Next to him is a small kid in a baseball cap, wearing shorts, and socks, and whose eyes are popping out of his head, almost like Marty Feldman.

"Geeeeeeooooorrrrrggggeee?????" yells the smaller kid.

I nod my head and he just continues to walk towards me. My guess is that he's Gilbert.

As I get closer and closer, the kid's eyes pop more and more out of his head. He looks down at my sneakers. White Nikes with yellow logos and red shoelaces. He looks at my pants. Black ladies stretch jeans. He looks at my t-shirt and leather vest. Furious George "Ramones Style" shirt, and vest, with buttons and U.S. pins. He then looks up at my face and head. Blonde hair, and I'm sure wrinkles around my eyes. I'm tired.

Suddenly I'm on top of Josh and Gilbert, and things kick back into regular motion.

"George?" asks Gilbert, looking up at me with his alien boy eyes.

I look at Gilbert and nod my head.

Suddenly his lower jaw starts to quiver, then he reaches out and touches my leather vest.

"I touched the leather vest," he says in almost a whisper.

"The holy grail of punk rock," says Josh.

I feel like running back into the van, driving to the airport, and flying back to New York. Where they treat me like the pussy I am.

"I touched your vest," says Gilbert. Josh nods his head, then laughs.

"I think Gilbert likes you," says Josh. "You're his biggest idol. Next to Green Day and Ben Weasel. But now you are probably his biggest."

I tell Gilbert it is great meeting him and shake his hand. His jaw trembles, and I feel like a moron. I shake Josh's hand, and he gives me a good firm handshake. These are good kids.

We make our way toward the party, and I get a good look around me. There is a large dinosaur on the front lawn, with a bunch of children inside of it. It is one of those bouncy domes. All the children have their shoes off, and are bouncing around. I look over to another part of the lawn. There is a cotton candy machine. Then I look to another part, and see children's games. One game of knock-over-the-milk-bottles, and one of throw-the-bean-bag-in-the-clown's-mouth.

"Nice party," says Gilbert to me, "huh?"

I look around me.

"It's rockin'," I tell him.

"I knew ya'd like it! I knew it!" screams Gilbert. "I'm so happy you came." Then he hugs me. I hug him back, sheepishly.

After we all raid the cooler and get some sodas, Gilbert tells us all about the party.

"We were gonna have a party just for you, but it was my niece's birthday, and she's six, so we thought we'd combine the two."

"Good idea," I say to Gilbert as I look at all the six-year-old girls in the bouncy dome, staring out with complete fear at us punk rockers.

"Great idea," says Todd. Sarcastic prick. I love that guy.

"Do you guys want to play some of the games? Or want pizza?" asks Gilbert.

We tell him we do, and all follow him into his house. On the way in, Gilbert introduces me to a cute-looking woman in a clown suit. She's got nice boobs and a great ass.

"George," says Gilbert, "this is my mom! Mom, this is Furious George!"

Doh.

I say hello to Gilbert's mom, and she says hello back. She then tells me that she is surprised that Gilbert's friends are so old, especially since he has only just turned fourteen.

"We like young kids," I tell her.

She kind of just stares at me. Then her niece, the birthday girl, walks by.

"Oh, look," I say, trying to make conversation, "there's the birthday girl. Isn't she pretty!"

Gilbert's mother grabs the niece and holds her close.

"Have fun at the party," she tells me, then rushes the little girl away.

We all get some pizza, and whatever food is around, and eat in the yard. I sit on a plaque rooted in the ground that says something about Jesus and This Happy Home. We're definitely not in New York.

After we finish eating, Todd and Stoots start to play the beanbag game. I tell them that maybe they should wait until some of the little kids leave, and they inform me that they already have.

I look around, and most of the children are gone. And the ones that are left are being rushed away by their parents. And they are all staring at us. I over hear one of the parents talking to Gilbert's mom.

"I thought this was going to be a Christian party," whines the parent. The mother then explains that we are Gilbert's friends, Curious George, and that we are playing in town that evening.

I watch as Todd and Stoots try to throw the beanbag into the clown's mouth. They miss most of the time. But Stoots comes very close. He has a great arm, and it looks like he could have been a pitcher for the Yankees. Later I find out he used to be a big local ball player.

"So, George," says my pal Aaron, "these are your fans! Fourteen-year-old boys and six-year-old girls."

"Yeah," I say, contemplating my

future, "ya know, Aaron, maybe I'm in the wrong business. Maybe I should be a clown for children's parties."

"George," says Aaron, "I hate to tell you this, but you already are."

Eventually I get in on the beanbag game and actually score. The whole time I am playing, Gilbert films me with his video camera.

"Hey George," says Gilbert, from behind his camera, "Do you want to make some cotton candy?"

I tell him no, but thanks anyway. If I make it, I'll eat it. Then I'll get the 'Rhea. Again.

"Please?" he whines.

All the other guys start whining. "Please?"

"OK," I say to Gilbert and camera, "What do I do?"

Todd walks over to me and explains that I gotta take the paper cone thing, and run it in circles around the inside of the machine after it's turned on, and that's how it's done.

I ask him how he knows so much and he shows me his arm. It's pink.

"I already made some," says Todd. "The shit doesn't come off, and it goes up into your armpits."

"Can I lick it off?" yells Michael.

Gilbert just looks at us.

I grab some cotton candy powder shit and pour it into the machine, then make Gilbert flip the switch. The thing turns on and makes lots of noise.

"What do I do now?" I yell at Gilbert.

Gilbert yells back to me to put my arm in there and run the cone around.

"I'm not putting my arm in there. I don't want pink shit under my arm. The only pink I want near me is vaginas!"

"Vaginas!" yells hewhocannotbenicknamed. He loves that word.

Then Michael says it. As does Todd. I look over Gilbert's shoulder and see his mom. I kind of smile, like a moron, then put my arm in the machine. Maybe it'll cut it off, and my mouth along with it.

"You have to twirl it around and around," yells Gilbert. I do so. And suddenly cotton candy starts to appear on the cone. And my arm.

I do it more and more, and soon I have a huge wad of cotton candy. Gilbert turns off the machine, and I pull out the cone and hold it above my head like the Statue of Liberty. Everyone claps.

"That's awesome, George," says Gilbert, and I say proudly, "I know."

Josh just stares at me funny.

After I give the cotton candy to Rall, who says he wants to eat it, I go inside the house. Gilbert follows me. With the camera. Turned on.

"Wanna see my room, George?" asks Gilbert. I tell him that I most certainly do. Actually, I really wanted to find a bathroom so I can get the sugar out from my armpits.

I enter Gilbert's room, with kid and camera behind me. On the walls are posters for Green Day, Screeching Weasel, and Furious George. Josh wasn't kidding.

"Do you like my room?" Gilbert asks.

I look at his cute little bed, his socks all over the floor, his television with video game console, and his book collection. Typical kid's room. It makes me homesick for my apartment in New York.

"It's awesome, Gilbert," I say to him as I pat him on the shoulder, "but what are all those wooden boxes in the corner?"

Gilbert explains to me that he built a bunch of wooden boxes connected together by wooden tunnels for his cat. He tells me the cat loves it.

"Cool," I say, looking at my picture on his wall.

"George?" asks Gilbert.

"Yes, Gilbert?" I say to him, as he closes his bedroom door, leaving us both together, in there, alone.

"Will you lay in my bed?"

"Huh?" I say to the kid, who is still holding the camera.

"Lay in my bed. You know. Pretend like you are sleeping. I want everyone to think George Tabb slept in my bed."

"Um, Gilbert," I stammer, "I don't think that's such a good idea. People might get the wrong idea."

"What wrong idea?" he asks, totally clueless.

"The idea that you and I are, um, er…never mind."

"OK," says Gilbert, "Will you lay in my bed now?"

I lay on top of his sheets. He tells me to get beneath them and take off some of my clothes. I tell him I always sleep on top of the sheets, and always with my clothes and leather vest on.

"Wow," says Gilbert, "really?"

"Really."

"That's punk rock!"

Gilbert films me on top of the sheets. He tells me to close my eyes and pretend I am sleeping. I do as I'm told. I make snoring noises, and he laughs. I giggle along with him. Cute kid.

Finally I have enough of pretending to sleep. So I pretend to wake up. I rub my eyes, curse a few times, and ask where the hell my fucking coffee is.

Gilbert laughs.

"Gilbert," I say, in all seriousness, "I gotta wash this crap off my arm and take a leak. Where's your piss room?"

"Right down the hall. But before you leave, can you pretend to look through my record collection, and play my Super Nintendo?"

I do as I'm told, and finally start toward the bathroom. Gilbert is right behind me with his camera.

We walk through a large room where some guy is sleeping on a La-Z-Boy chair.

"That's my dad," whispers Gilbert.

I tell him I figured as much. And that all dads do that. He laughs.

"OK, Gilbert," I say, as I enter the bathroom, "I'll be right out, and we can hang out some more!"

"Can't I come in the bathroom with you, George? I want to film you. And then show all my friends. George Tabb was in my bed, and then in my bathroom! No one will believe it!"

"No one will believe *this*..." I say, as I slam the door in the kid's face. I need a few seconds to pull myself together. I'll never forget the look of shock on Gilbert's face as I slammed the door, though. I think I broke his heart.

I take a piss and wash out my underarms. That pink fiber crap really sticks to those hairs.

Finally I exit the bathroom, and Josh is standing there.

"Where's Gilbert?" I ask him.

"He's upset about something," Josh says.

I tell Josh what happened, and he

tells me that Gilbert always gets a little excited, and it's good to slap him down once in a while. But still I feel bad.

I find Gilbert in his socks in the living room, futzing with his camera.

"Sorry Gilbert," I say to him, "I was grouchy. I didn't mean to be mean to you. I just needed some privacy."

"Are we still friends?" asks Gilbert, as his lower jaw begins to quiver again.

"Best!" I say.

"Gilbert gives me a big hug, and I give him a big hug back. I almost crush the little guy. The next thing I know I find myself in the bouncy dome with my sneakers and vest off, having the time of my life. Todd joins us, and shows us all these skateboard moves. Then Stoots comes in, and shows us all up by doing awesome backflips. Meanwhile, Gilbert is filming the whole thing with a smile on his face. Finally we have to get out because Gilbert's mom thinks we'll break the damn thing. As it turns out, she is sort of right. At Gilbert's last party, the guys in John Cougar Concentration Camp and The Dwarves popped a hole in one of those bouncy domes. Damn punks.

As I sit on the lawn, putting my sneakers and vest back on, I thank Gilbert and Josh for the wonderful party.

"Do you really have to leave?" asks Gilbert.

I tell him we did, but we'll see him in a couple of hours at the show. He thanks us for coming to his party and tells us next time we better sleep over. I tell him we will, as long as we don't have to get up too early.

We load into the van and wave to the kids as we pull away.

"Great party, huh?" I say to everyone in the van.

They all just stare at me. In silence.

* * *

That night we played a rocking set in San Diego. We called the audience a bunch of California pussies and told them to go fuck themselves.

They threw stuff at us, spit at us, and flipped us off. It was a great show. Not as great as Corona, where we played the next night and were threatened with death, but still pretty good. During "Gilligan," Josh and Gilbert joined us on stage to hold up the signs, and I'll never forget either of their smiles. F.Y.P played a rockin' set as well, and as we were all leaving, Gilbert reached over and touched my U.S. pins on my leather vest.

"I'll never forget you guys," said Gilbert. And Josh nodded his head in agreement.

"I'll never forget you guys, either," I said to both of them. And then gave them huge hugs. It was my turn for my jaw to quiver. So I left as quickly as possible.

* * *

"What did you do?" screamed Pippi Longstockings as I struggled on my knees. "What did you do?" Then she kicked me again.

Hard.

Finally I was able to confront the little animal because Rall held her back.

"What are you, the anti-Christ?" I yelled at her, "Are you the little red-haired devil kid from *Problem Child 2*?"

"No," she said calmly. Then sucked her thumb.

"Then what's the fucking deal, you, you little beast?" I screamed. I was in pain.

She just glared at me, then said, "There was a study done on lab rats. Half the lab rats listened to pop and soft music. The other half listened to punk rock and hard rock."

I just stared at her.

"The rats that listened to soft and pop music," she explained, "lived for 48 months. The rats that listened to punk rock lived for 12 months."

I continued to stare at her.

In shock.

"You people," she said very calmly, looking at everyone in the room, "you'll get what you deserve."

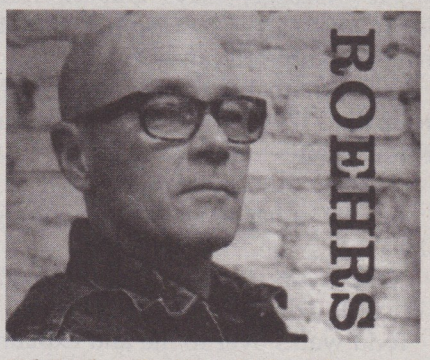
With that, she stormed out of the house, leaving us with our jaws on the floor.

I hate the kids.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

1. www.georgetabb.com
2. My books, *Playing Right Field* and *Surfing Armageddon* are out now on Soft Skull Books. Check them out at any bookstore!
3. Been listening to the Rydells a lot lately—they go! Also 2 Man Advantage, Norman Bates & The Showerheads, the Bullys and Heap! Punk Rock!
4. A big thank you to Monica Nelson from the Obituaries for all her help and support over the last year with this 9/11 shit I'm sick from. You can read about that at www.myspace.com/helpgeorgetabb.
5. Happy Late Birthday, Mykel Board!!!



I'd Rather Be Hated Than Ignored

Fuck! Waylon Jennings leapt out of his motherfucking grave when HAMMERLOCK cued up their new *Forgotten Range* CD! This new full-length on Steel Cage Records out of Philadelphia displays HAMMERLOCK at the top of their game! Travis, Elizabeth and Kenny are two of the most important songwriters representing disenfranchised workingmen in the United States. These lyrics cut to the quick—no beating about the bush!

Travis slaps you in the face from the minute this CD starts to play! "Conquest Train" is a fucking brilliant slice of authentic American country scum rock! Read these words: "Sometimes I feel like I've been cornered / And I ain't got a friend / But I will never bend / But the older I get and the more I see / You know it's quite clear to me / That the only time I'll rest in peace / Is when I'm six-foot deep / And now I'll bow my head / And pray for conquest / But I feel like I missed the train / I've been walking the straight and narrow / And sometimes it ain't worth the pain / All my life I've been the idiot / That wouldn't come in from the rain / Like a soldier with Coronado / That's waiting to die for Spain / When I hear these men talk about / How they found inner peace / Wish I could drop a nuke down in my soul / So this old world would cease /

I ain't the only one out there / That would like to take me / Out of my own skin / And I been a thorn in this world's side / Ever since time began / Sometimes I look at the highway / And I just wanna run / Think if I just deserted / All my worries would be gone / That's when I realize / That this could never be / Don't matter how many miles I ride / I could never run from me."

Liz and Travis have a masterpiece of a ballad with "Wrong Side of Town." This song invites you to the unfortunate locale where lots of blue-collar folks end up. Not a pretty picture! You ride the death train to song six, which rings so true for many people! "Living On Retreads" nails it! Read some of the real-life situations that HAMMERLOCK writes so accurately about in this tune: "Living on retreads / Looking like a bum / Sometimes I'm made of money / Sometimes I got none / When my pockets are all empty / My woman's still around / My heart is in the country / But I'm stuck in the town / sometimes I'm heading downhill / And my brakes begin to fade / And I'm headed for a big crash / Then I hit an uphill grade / Sometimes I run on vapor / Sometimes my tank is full / Sometimes life is like a hard ride / On an angry bull / And I've paid dearly for everything that's mine / Living on retreads borrowing time / Sometimes you get to win some / Nobody likes to lose / But the ride it is a short one / No matter what you choose / Sometimes I'm running hot now / Than I'm too cold to start / Sometimes I give it all away / Sometimes I got no heart." Fuck yes! That tune hits the motherfucking nail right on the head!

Song seven is the title cut of the excellent CD, *Forgotten Range*, this song, like so many of Mr. Kenny's most powerful songs, is semi-autobiographical. These lyrics will send a chill down your spine. Read on: "I was born way too late / My soul is from a hundred years ago / But freedom's light / Still shines bright / When you escape that city glow / So I'll take the path / That's been less traveled / I'll take the trail not so easy to find / And I'll ride the range / That's been forgotten / That's how I like to spend my time / I heard the wind / From not long ago / When the answer that blew in was wrong / 'Cause we used to lean right / And we used to be just / And we used to stand tall / And we used to be strong." Absolutely brilliant! Fucking genius!

Song number eleven, "No Man's Land" is co-written by Simon Stokes, Travis Kenney and Elizabeth Kenney. This fucker is nothing short of stunning! Read some of the words of wisdom from "No Man's Land": "Sittin' here in no man's land / Lost alone in time / Bars are closed time's running out / I'm at the finish line / Before is gone and now is now / The future don't bode well / Sky is dark death rides at night / Is it heaven or is it hell / I'm too far gone and the devil's at my back / I'm going the wrong way on a one-way track / I feel the sadness of my sins / I see strange voices in the wind / They come to carry me away / A cold blank stare is all I got to say / Smoke surrounds the tombstone where I'll sleep / And it rises from my last cigarette / And as I fall to my knees / I think of all the promises I can't keep."

Song fourteen is a fucking wake-up call for all the politically correct lemmings! The words in "You Can't Stop War: are frighteningly on the money. Read your history books—Travis has it dead-nut! Here's an example of the power wielded here: "Rolling just like thunder / Cross an open plain / Flashing just like lightening / Cutting through the rain / Moving like a freight train / Coming down the track / A calm comes when it's over / You know it's coming back / And you can't stop it cause / It's what man is living for / You can't stop war / Every border and boundary / Every country and town / Was carved out of somebody / Being laid in the ground / Our streets are paved with bloodshed / We're not the only ones / The spoils have gone to the victors / Since the world begun / And if it's worth a dime / Then it's worth fighting for / You can't stop war / If peace is really the answer / How come it's never won / You got no stomach for fighting / Prepare to bow to someone / 'Cause you can't run from war, man / The best that you can hope for / Is to be on the winning side / And as long as life is worth fighting for / You can't stop war." Fucking "A"!

HAMMERLOCK continue to demonstrate through songwriting and singing skills on "Lay Me Down in the Dirt," "The Wings of Alcohol," and "Lonesome, Orn'ry and Mean."

You can listen to your David Allen Coe records at full volume, you can mull over the insights of Billy Joe Shaver and Merle Haggard. You WILL realize that Travis Kenney is one of these rare songsmiths that will carve out his own niche in American music. Fifty years from now these songs will be recognized as the stripped down raw, feelings of a hard-working American man trying to feed, clothe and protect his family. This shit is American music at its best! Get your new HAMMERLOCK *Forgotten Range* CD from Steel Cage Records, PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125; SteelCage Records.com.

TKO Records from Huntington Beach, California has two hard rocking CD's prepared for you! As luck would have it, you are treated to storming punk rock from two of Austin, Texas's most respected punk outfits!

The first blast of ruthless punk rock is administered by one of the most powerful bands playing hardcore punk in the United States today! THE KRUM BUMS have entitled the new CD *As the Tide Turns*.

THE KRUM BUMS lead off with "Disregarded Youth," about the youth "left alone and broken—depression's all they ever sell." Next up, you get "Fall," with "fucking faces, disgustingly stoic, ghosts of routine / Fucking machines that have no names / Fall under the weight of the world." Song four is "Misery": "Unwanted children taught only fear and self-pity, taught only lies." Number five is "La Plaga," with some poignant lyrics: "Starving eyes mean nothing / I only feel ashamed / The ashes of our fires have blackened our hearts / Compassion is lost." Depressing those thoughts are to deal with!

After "Sometimes" and "Last Breath," THE KRUM BUMS offer "In Sickness We Prevail" where "mournful vultures spread infection through fear / Quarantined mind breeds the hate." Tracks nine and ten are "Fresh Models"

and "Scratching on the Eight Ball," which lead to "Losing My Mind"—where these Austin maniacs "struggle and fight uncontrollable hate…All that we've dreamed is lost." Whew! That's not a very encouraging outlook!

Next up is the fine title cut "As the Tide Turns" on this call to arms, THE KRUM BUMS take an oath: "We fight with no remorse / To make a peace through the death of all these lying pigs / All those who oppose us will drown in the blood of their young." These motherfuckers have thrown down the gauntlet!

THE KRUM BUMS finish off their new CD with "Forsaken." THE KRUM BUMS have now come into their own as a major hardcore punk outfit. We can all feel lucky to have leaders like the KRUM BUMS in the punk rock community!

The second release on TKO this month is by the LOWER CLASS BRATS, also from Austin, Texas. This live LOWER CLASS BRATS *Loud and Out of Tune* double CD package comes right on the heels of *New Seditionaries*, the best LP the LOWER CLASS BRATS have ever made!

The track list on CD one of this two-CD package features fifteen LOWER CLASS BRATS originals plus a cover of "Sex and Violence" by MAD PARADE and "Bullet" by THE MISFITS. All live from the Allen Theater in Southgate California on July 28, 2006. Read this set list: "Ultra-Violence"; "Airwave Raid"; "Bit the Bullet"; "Sex and Violence"; "Standard Issue"; "Rather Be Hated Than Ignored"; "Clockwork Fuse"; "I'm a Mess"; "Psycho"; "No Doves Fly Here"; "Who Writes Your Rules?"; "Chaos, Riot & Ruin"; "Addicted to Oi!"; "Bullet"; "Just Like Clockwork"; "Safety Pinned and Sick"; and "Orphans Don't Run." CD number two in this set contains thirteen tracks recorded live in El Corazon in Seattle, WA on May 4th, 2005. Fuck yes! The LOWER CLASS BRATS have conquered the punk fans from coast to coast in the US and Europe!

Get your KRUM BUMS and LOWER CLASS BRATS product from TKO Records, 8941 Atlanta Ave, #505, Huntington Beach, CA 92646; TKORecords.com.

THE TEMPLARS swept through California recently! These New York City skinhead giants played two great shows for the skins and punks. One show was in Oakland, California and the other was in Los Angeles, California. The crowd behaved reasonably well both nights. THE TEMPLARS graced us with some of the finest skinhead music to grace these shores in a long time. Some of the songs included in the sets were: "Flight of the Seagull"; "I Believe in Myself"; "The Glory That once Was"; "Four Walls"; "Skins and Punks"; "Victim"; "Make Your Mark"; "New York"; "Templars"; "Revenge"; and "War in the Streets." THE TEMPLARS did a nice cover of ANTISOCIAL's "We Are the New Punks." Excellent! Thanks goes out to the support bands that got the crowd fired up for THE TEMPLARS, included were: NUTS + BOLTS, RAT CITY RIOT, STRONG ARM AND THE BULLIES, ROAD SIDE BOMBS, INTREPID—A.F.A.—FORCES, and more. Thanks to Duke and Gonzo and Mark for making it all happen.

Until next month…

See you around…

See you in hell!

One thing that has long vexed a lot of people in the DIY scene is the amount of waste produced in the process of recording, releasing, distributing, and selling records and CDs. In an era where more and more people are starting to question the amount of resources they consume and the impact that has on the world at large, I thought we would take some time to look at strategies for applying the well-worn adage reduce-reuse-recycle to the DIY hardcore scene.

The first leg of the stool is of course to reduce. Anyone who is involved in music right now is aware that there are more bands, labels and records now than ever in the history of hardcore/punk music. Punk music has proliferated to the corners of the earth, and easy access to gear, home recording equipment, easy-to-use software, and one-click CD or LP manufacturing mean that just about anyone with a credit card can record and release a record in short order. Anyone who works in a store or does distro quickly realizes though that the majority of these releases are greeted with total indifference by the public. Most stores these days seem to make most of their money off used records and a handful of "hype" new releases as well as a stable of reissues and bootlegs. I am willing to speculate that of the thousands of CDs and LPs manufactured by brokers offering "1000 retail-ready CDs for $999" and the like, only a fraction actually enter the retail stream and most are never sold and then returned. There is a large and growing number of bands whose material is not sought after enough to be picked up by much any distributor and whose primary outlet for selling their releases is their own gigs and websites.

The question then arises: Is there enough demand to justify such bands releasing physical product at all? It does seem that most bands these days start with a "career path" in mind that includes a national tour, full length CD/LP, a full selection of merch and all the trimmings. While I don't want to get into a deep discussion about the relative value of any/all these bands efforts, I would pose the question "Is all of this really necessary?" In the music business over the past few years there has been a lot of "throw shit at the wall and see what sticks" decisions when it comes to releasing CDs. The CD is so cheap to make that a label only has to retail a few hundred to break even. There are dozens of labels cranking out CDs at a furious pace, the majority of which probably never sell through a first pressing of 1000. This mentality is quickly running hard into the wall of the public switching from CD to digital with a diehard group of elitists still championing resurgent vinyl. Perhaps the precipitous decline in CD sales in the retail environment is sending a mes-

sage from the consumer to the producer—why not keep most bands releases exclusively in the digital realm and "reduce" the amount of manufactured music commodity radically? The amount of energy and resources used to create mp3 players, digital music files, and computers is of course large as well. But the amount of energy and resources used to produce, ship, retail, and dispose of CDs and records is certainly many times greater. If a band/release is good enough, than label interest or demand for a vinyl version would follow apace. As sensible as this is in theory, it's much harder to put into practice, because everyone thinks their band is the best ever, that they are entitled to have a CD, tour, etc., and often have delusions of "making it." I think one of the keys to reducing the amount of DIY solid waste is to some how disentangle the ego from the manufacturing process and raise the bar critically so that only those releases with great merit make the leap to physical product. I've noted before that in any other field, the market would do this for us. But in music, so many people are willing to take a loss or make un-economic choices that we are often burdened with "rich kid" bands that are able to tour and release records indefinitely despite there being almost no interest from the fans.

I know it's ironic that a label owner and record collector would advocate a switch to digital music. And indeed, I'm only advocating this switch for all the bands whose records I *don't* want to buy or listen too. But I think you can see my point from both sides—that it's easy to argue for an end to most bands putting out physical releases and going all digital *except* your own band, your buddies band, the bands *you* like. This dilemma is a major reason why the process has not progressed further.

Another component of reduction *is* being forced on us already by market forces and that is the collapse of independent retail and many distributors. Simply put, there are fewer and fewer markets for DIY punk records than there were a few years ago. I've argued before that the distribution and label scene is long overdue for a "correction" and I feel that that correction is underway at present. While this means it's harder for the good bands to get their records out to the fans, it also makes it harder for the weak bands to do the same. Where there's a will, there's a way, and in most cases when people really like a band they will make an effort to track down their releases. However, making the whole process a little more difficult and throwing up some obstacles may in fact discourage a lot of less deserving bands from throwing their hat into the ring. A simple correlation can be made with touring. When gas was $1.50 a gallon, any band could tour and it didn't matter if they broke even because they could self finance a tour out of pocket. However, in an era of $3 (and probably soon $5 or $6) a gallon gas, how many bands will continue to make that effort? I hate to champion market forces at the expense of art, but it might not be so bad to see only the bands that a lot of people actually like, while at the same time generally reducing the load on DIY promoters, show spaces, etc.

In summary, quality over quantity, or less is more.

In the "reuse" area I think the DIY hardcore scene is actually very well advanced. The rise of internet commerce and auction sites mean that second-hand records and CDs are changing hands at a very rapid clip. Anyone who works in a record store or is immersed in the collector culture can see how the "efficiency" of the market system rationalizes used records. The good ones rapidly soar to become expensive collector items and the mediocre plummet to dollar bins worldwide in an ever-accelerating cycle. That is to say some items took 20 years to become sought after collectibles, while some today reach that status in six months. While there is much to criticize about this process, it does exhibit a certain efficiency in "shaking loose" records that would otherwise be collecting dust and pushing to the bottom those with no interest. In this fashion it only takes a few rotations of this cycle to see what records are worthy of re press and which are better off in the landfill.

The landfill? Isn't that where most of the shitty records and CDs eventually wind up? Go to any used record store and there will probably be box after box of records that no one is interested in buying even for a quarter each. Many, many more are in boxes in garages and basements or still in the boxes they came shipped in piled up in band practice rooms. So, for the meat of this month's column, here are some ways to recycle the solid waste of the music business. First step of course is to try to find someone who wants/appreciates the records you have. There are a lot of resources at your disposal to try to sell or give them away at gigs, online, at a festival, etc. When all else fails almost every record and CD can be reduced to recyclable components.

LP covers are typically printed on a coated cardstock. This is recyclable in almost any paper recycling dumpster and in many cities by curbside pick up. A quick check of local recycling guidelines can determine if covers are recyclable in your area at the curb or if you have to take them to a paper recycling center. They are essentially the same as cereal boxes or other cardstock packaging. It shouldn't be too hard to find a recycling dumpster at someone's work to put them in if all else fails. There are also some creative strategies for re using LP covers. Most covers can be cut along the seams and folded inside out. These can then be screen printed on to make new record covers. Another strategy is to have 12x12 flat covers printed and glue them over the front and back of an old LP cover. I've had pretty good luck so far with painting over old record covers by using old paint and a brush and also a paint sprayer. This means you don't have to cut the cover and turn it inside out and you can then paint the covers with a solid color as a base coat for screen printing, stenciling, or decoupage.

7" covers are often recyclable in the same way as LP covers and many are eminently more recyclable since they are just xeroxed office paper. I've had some luck painting over 7" covers with a paint sprayer and then screen-printing over them. (There's a step by step about this on my website.) However, unless you have label dead stock it's going to be hard to find hundreds of uniform 7" covers to recycle in this

fashion.

The paper inner sleeves of records can of course be recycled with any paper recyclables. Plain white sleeves can always be separated as lots of collectors like to replace their plastic sleeves with paper ones or remove records from printed inner sleeves to prevent seam splits. You can probably unload pretty large numbers of paper sleeves by just putting them out for free at a record store or on a distro table.

The plastic sleeves most records come packaged in are of course re-useable and always in demand for people to sleeve records from their collection. Really beat up sleeves or split sleeves as well as the plastic inner sleeves from records can just be crumpled up and stuffed inside each other then thrown in a box to use as packing material.

Shrink-wrap is the bane of many record stores and distros. I've had pretty good luck using old plastic sleeves or plastic inner sleeves to just filling them with crumpled shrink-wrap and other plastic. These then get tossed in a box with all the Styrofoam packing material that comes in the mail and gets reused as packing material on outbound orders.

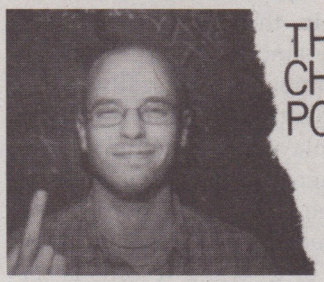
The vinyl itself is also recyclable. At United where I press my releases, they have a punch that punches the center labels out of records, which are then dropped down a chute and ground into tiny pellets (media) that can be melted down to make new records. Most pressing plants will accept dead stock vinyl for recycling as long as it's perfectly clean. Check with your pressing plant—at worst you'll have to pay shipping. There is, however, some satisfaction knowing that your boxes of unwanted records will be ground down to make new records.

Compact discs are also recyclable. There are a number of CD recyclers who will accept CD and DVDs. These are delaminated and or ground up and the component metal and plastic recycled. Again, at worst you will have to pay shipping. I found several recyclers online. I've gotten into the habit of tossing unwanted CDs into an empty 100-count CD box and will promptly mail it to a recycler when full.

CD jewel cases are of course re-useable. If you have a lot of them in good condition they are actually highly prized by labels and distributors who get their CDs shipped to them in bulk. Also you can turn the tray card inside out and use them for home burned CDs. If you have a lot of empty CD cases, ask local labels or distros if they can use them. Or just put them in a grocery bag or box and leave them at a record store for free—chances are they will get snatched up quickly. I have not been able to find any resources for recycling broken or un-useable cases. But hopefully a market will develop for this sort of recycling as costs of plastics rise.

One thing not a lot of people think about re-using is LP mailers and padded envelopes. I am constantly fishing stuff like this out of the trash. LP mailers are a rather unique packing item and not really common for any other use. There are only a handful of shipping supply companies still making these and if you don't live near one, you have to get them shipped to you. Most mailers cost between 50 and 75 cents each. With the slim margins on most DIY records adding a mailer and postage costs to a single LP can really drive up the price. Everyone I know who sells records online or has a distro carefully re-uses every mailer they get in the mail. If you buy a lot of records online you should really consider saving all your record mailers. Chances are you know someone who is selling records online or doing a mail order you can pass them on to. Likewise for padded envelopes and mailers. Since these have bubble wrap in them, they can't be recycled with the rest of the office paper recycling. If the mailers are too small for CDs or records they also work great just as bubble wrap inside boxes, even if they are cut up and mangled.

I've been working at Extreme Noise, a volunteer DIY punk record store in Minneapolis, since 1994. In that time I've taken home countless numbers of LP boxes, mailers, padded envelopes, CD cases, and bags of Styrofoam popcorn and used them for my distro. By now I've saved thousands of dollars on boxes and packing material and saved tons of waste from the landfill, or at least re-used it instead of recycling it. Networking with other collectors, distros and stores you can probably find ways to re use all manner of ephemera of the record distribution world.



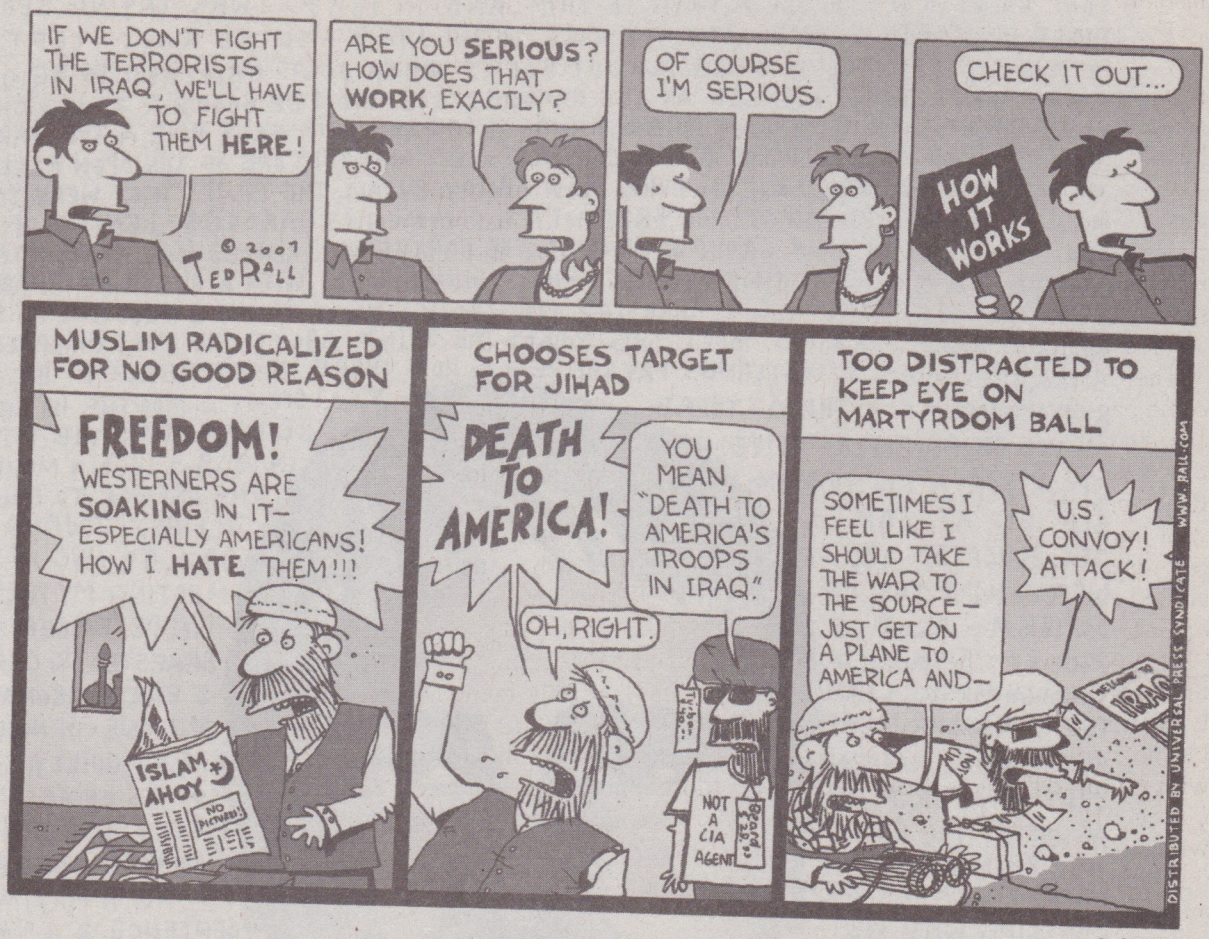
THREE CHORD POLITICS

chris hubbard

Another month passed, another birthday (creepin' towards 30), another issue to the printer—this one the first without Golnar as coordinator. It was a tough month, especially when our email server crashed (on the day ads were due, no less), leaving the magazine without email for almost a week, but as always *MRR* has a small but significant number of dedicated and committed folks upon which it can rely. Shit will always get done.

This is a good time for me to give an update on our coordinator situation. Over the last six months since Golnar gave her notice, we interviewed a few good candidates for the position. Finally, after careful deliberations and about a month before Golnar was set to leave the magazine, we came to a decision and offered the job to the applicant we thought was the strongest. However, at the same time this person was also offered the chance to go back to school with her tuition expenses covered, and in the end—unfortunately for the magazine—decided to take this opportunity instead.

What does this mean for *MRR*? Well, first of all, I'll be handling all content coordinator responsibilities until we find a replacement. (Please, be kind…) More importantly, the position is still open and we are looking for someone who is interested in coming out to lovely San Francisco to be a part of *MRR* and help run the magazine. At the moment we have a few folks we are considering, and hope to have someone to take the job, at least on an interim basis, within the next several months—but we feel very strongly about having another woman to fill Golnar's shoes. Think you would be interested (yes, *you*, reading this right now), but can't actually imagine yourself applying? Don't be crazy… Punk is about participating, being active. Go for it.


IF WE DON'T FIGHT THE TERRORISTS IN IRAQ, WE'LL HAVE TO FIGHT THEM HERE!
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ARE YOU SERIOUS? HOW DOES THAT WORK, EXACTLY?
OF COURSE I'M SERIOUS.
CHECK IT OUT...
HOW IT WORKS
MUSLIM RADICALIZED FOR NO GOOD REASON
FREEDOM! WESTERNERS ARE SOAKING IN IT— ESPECIALLY AMERICANS! HOW I HATE THEM!!!
ISLAM AHOY
CHOOSES TARGET FOR JIHAD
DEATH TO AMERICA!
YOU MEAN, "DEATH TO AMERICA'S TROOPS IN IRAQ."
OH, RIGHT.
NOT A CIA AGENT
TOO DISTRACTED TO KEEP EYE ON MARTYRDOM BALL
SOMETIMES I FEEL LIKE I SHOULD TAKE THE WAR TO THE SOURCE— JUST GET ON A PLANE TO AMERICA AND—
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WELCOME TO IRAQ
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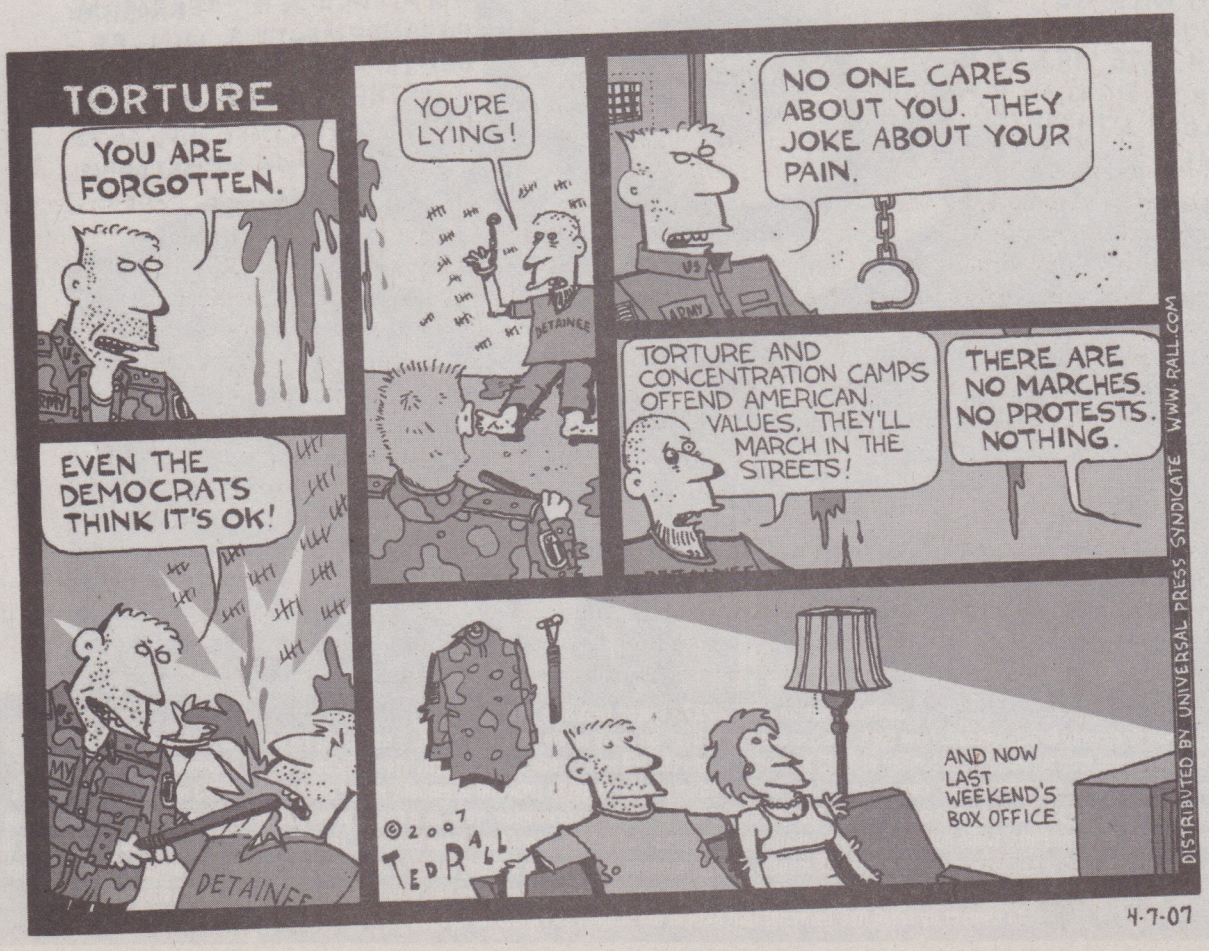
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YOU'RE LYING!
DETAINEE
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US ARMY
EVEN THE DEMOCRATS THINK IT'S OK!
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THERE ARE NO MARCHES. NO PROTESTS. NOTHING.
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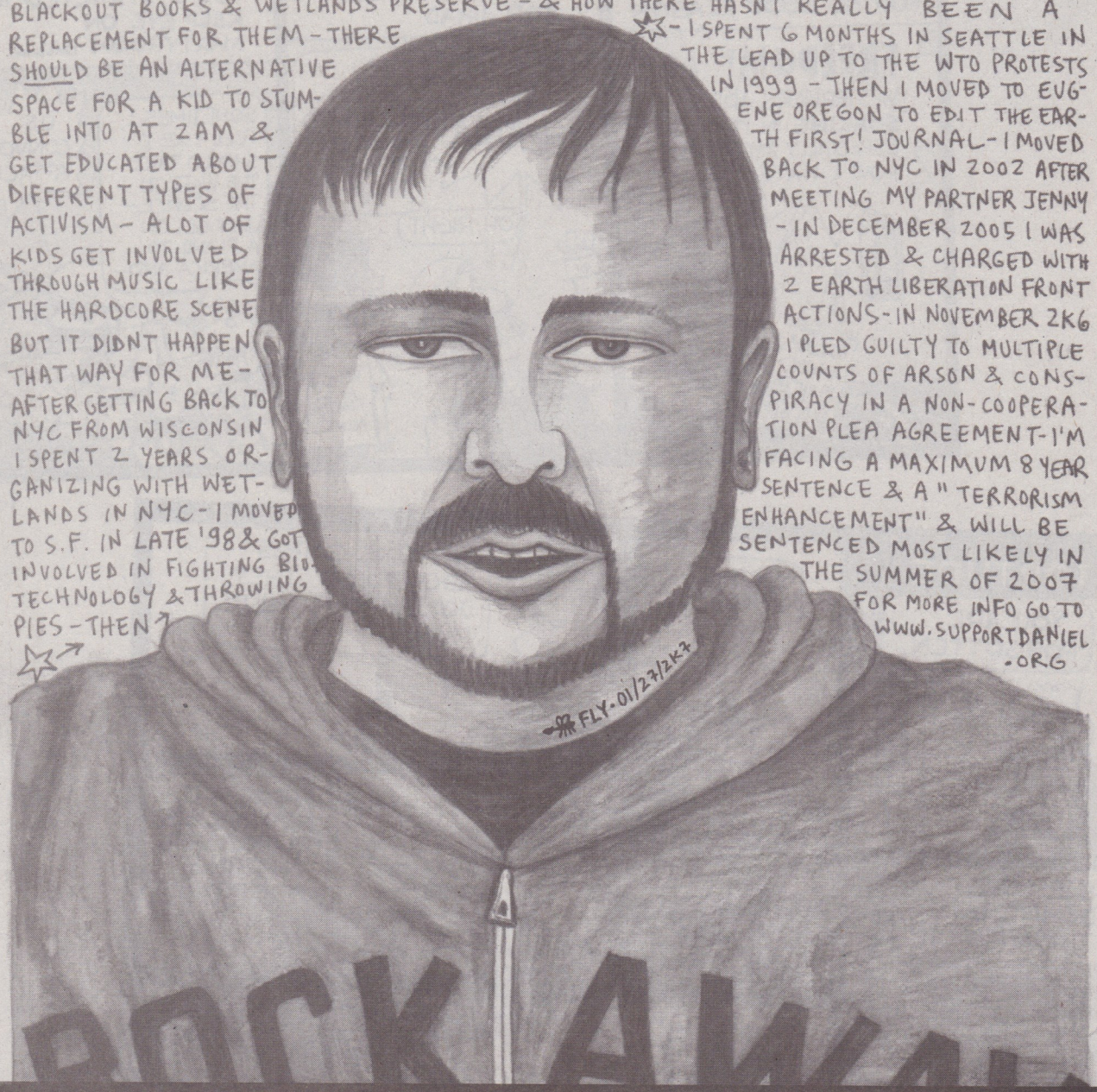
4-7-07

PEOPS

I GOT BACK TO NYC FROM A TRIP TO THAILAND IN 1997 - I WAS TRYING REALLY HARD TO GET INVOLVED IN SOME ACTIVISM HERE TO NO AVAIL - SO ONE NIGHT I LEFT A CLUB ON AVE B. & STUMBLED INTO BLACKOUT BOOKS WHICH JUST HAPPENED TO BE OPEN AT 2 AM - I WAS PRETTY AMAZED AT THE RANDOM COLLECTION OF BOOKS & ZINES ON SUBJECTS I WAS UNFAMILIAR WITH LIKE ANARCHISM - I RAIDED THEIR FREE PILE & THE EARTHFIRST! JOURNAL HAD A LISTING FOR A NYC CONTACT - SO I WENT TO ONE OF THE OPEN MEETINGS DOWN AT THE WETLANDS PRESERVE & I WAS BLOWN AWAY BY ALL THE ISSUES THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT LIKE ANIMAL RIGHTS, POLICE BRUTALITY & COMMUNITY GARDENS - I ENDED UP GETTING REALLY INVOLVED IN THEIR GROUP & WENT TO THE EARTHFIRST! RENDEZVOUS IN WISCONSIN - I CAMPED FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER & WENT SKINNY DIPPING WITH A BUNCH OF ANARCHO PUNKS FROM THE WEST COAST - GOT ARRESTED FOR PROTESTING A MINING PROJECT & SPENT A WEEK IN JAIL - TALKING ABOUT THIS MAKES ME THINK ABOUT THE LOSS OF SPACES LIKE BLACKOUT BOOKS & WETLANDS PRESERVE - & HOW THERE HASNT REALLY BEEN A REPLACEMENT FOR THEM - THERE SHOULD BE AN ALTERNATIVE SPACE FOR A KID TO STUMBLE INTO AT 2AM & GET EDUCATED ABOUT DIFFERENT TYPES OF ACTIVISM - ALOT OF KIDS GET INVOLVED THROUGH MUSIC LIKE THE HARDCORE SCENE BUT IT DIDNT HAPPEN THAT WAY FOR ME - AFTER GETTING BACK TO NYC FROM WISCONSIN I SPENT 2 YEARS ORGANIZING WITH WETLANDS IN NYC - I MOVED TO S.F. IN LATE '98 & GOT INVOLVED IN FIGHTING BIOTECHNOLOGY & THROWING PIES - THEN ☆→

☆ - I SPENT 6 MONTHS IN SEATTLE IN THE LEAD UP TO THE WTO PROTESTS IN 1999 - THEN I MOVED TO EUGENE OREGON TO EDIT THE EARTH FIRST! JOURNAL - I MOVED BACK TO NYC IN 2002 AFTER MEETING MY PARTNER JENNY - IN DECEMBER 2005 I WAS ARRESTED & CHARGED WITH 2 EARTH LIBERATION FRONT ACTIONS - IN NOVEMBER 2K6 I PLED GUILTY TO MULTIPLE COUNTS OF ARSON & CONSPIRACY IN A NON-COOPERATION PLEA AGREEMENT - I'M FACING A MAXIMUM 8 YEAR SENTENCE & A "TERRORISM ENHANCEMENT" & WILL BE SENTENCED MOST LIKELY IN THE SUMMER OF 2007 FOR MORE INFO GO TO WWW.SUPPORTDANIEL.ORG



Daniel McGowan - 02/27/2K7 - Lower East Side NYC

Daniel McGowan is originally from Rockaway Beach, Queens, New York - he has been an activist on many levels for many years - especially he has been involved in the struggle for social & environmental justice - Daniel was arrested in December of 2005 as part of a coordinated multi-state sweep of activists - indicative of the government's "green scare" focus - Daniel was offered two choices by the government: cooperate by informing on other people, or go to trial and potentially spend the rest of his life in prison. His only real option was to plead not guilty until he could reach a resolution of the case that permitted him to honor his principles. Now, as a result of months of litigation and negotiation, Daniel was able to admit to his role in these two incidents, while not implicating or identifying any other people who might have been involved. The government will now seek a sentence of eight years, while Daniel's lawyers will seek a sentence of no more than 63 months. The government will also be arguing for a "terrorism enhancement" in Daniel's case which his legal team will vigorously fight - Daniel is scheduled to be sentenced soon!! please go to the website for updates or to see how you can help - http://www.supportdaniel.org to contact fly email fly@bway.net (put MRR in the subject so i know its not spam)

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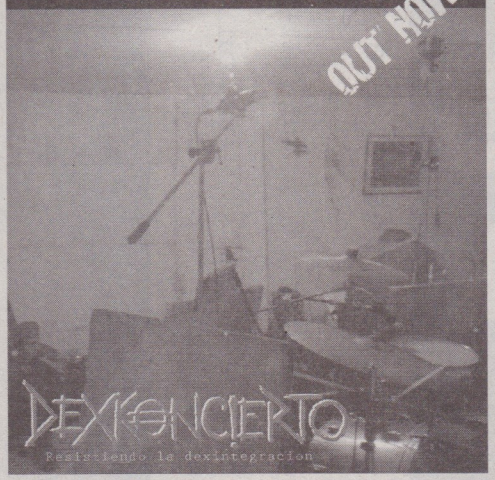

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To What End? "Concealed Below The Surface" Cd / Lp I consider this band to be the best Swedish Hardcore band going right now.

Misery "Production Through Destruction" Cd Re-release of this hard to find classic crust album from the early 90's

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MRR NEWS

MRR NEWS FOR ISSUE #288 COMPILED BY ARIEL CELESTE AND CHRIS HUBBARD

DANISH SQUAT UNGDOMSHUSET EVICTED, SUPPORTERS RIOT

From www.ungdomshuset.dk

After 24 years as an active alternative to mainstream culture, Ungdomshuset was violently evicted on March 1st, 2007. The eviction led to massive protests and within hours thousands of young demonstrators clashed with riot police. Everywhere kids were throwing bricks and barricading the streets. The police answered the protests with teargas and attacked any and all crowds with armoured cars and on foot with batons. Within a few days more than 850 were arrested in what had become the biggest action in the history of the Danish police force. But the protest still continued.

Following the eviction, protests spread far beyond Copenhagen. In cities all over Denmark, activists did actions locally or headed for Copenhagen. Throughout Europe, embassies were occupied and hundreds demonstrated in cities all over. Also as far away as Russia, Japan and the United States (to name a few) people protested the eviction.

The Danish left wing news site www.modkraft.dk followed the events closely and translated articles into English and German, enabling many across the world to keep track on what was happening. Copenhagen has calmed down a bit though the actions continue. But since Modkraft.dk cannot continue to cover the events as closely, updates and news will be posted on www.ungdomshuset.dk with more regularity. If you need to contact the organization please do not hesitate to write to this email address: kontakt@ungeren.info.

The struggle will continue until there is a new youth house in Copenhagen.

COMMUNIQUE FROM THE UNGDOMSHUSET • MARCH 9TH, 2007

"All changed, changed utterly:
A terrible beauty is born."

Friends, local and international, we are still here and we've never been stronger.

On the March 1st, 2007 Ungdomshuset Jagtvej 69 was, after a long, hard-fought resistance, finally evicted in one of the largest planned police operations in the history of Denmark. An attack on one of the biggest autonomous cultural and social centres in Europe and on freespaces everywhere.

For nearly an hour our friends fought against the police and bulldozers, with everything they had. Another victory and show of defiance against the Danish Police and State, who believed they would have us out in four minutes!!

The anger, outrage and frustrations manifested in a wave of solidarity and resistance not limited to the streets of Nørrebro. Copenhagen burns and the sirens have yet to stop.

Unlimited, heartfelt gratitude goes out to our friends internationally whose determined solidarity and displays of compassion continues to inspire.

Our four demands for a youth house remain. The physical and political pressure implemented by international support is crucial in pushing beyond personal and social boundaries and relations.

With this in mind we invite you back to join us once again in the streets of Copenhagen. For those who cannot come, we encourage you to take creative and militant action in your own cities, neighbourhoods and communities.

The state's monopoly on physical force and the brutal social control by police has never been more evident. Arrests in the streets and people's homes, leading to imprisonment and deportations based on empty charges, have become an everyday occurrence. Their mistake! Oppression breeds resistance. Through growing social communications, self activity and networking we stand together. Our anger doesn't recede ...

We don't forgive. We don't forget.
The struggle continues ...

—UNGDOMSHUSET CREW

MAN-MADE TIRE REEF OFF FLORIDA PROVES AN ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER

By Brian Skoloff, Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. – A mile offshore from this city's high-rise condos and spring-break bars lie as many as 2 million old tires, strewn across the ocean floor—a white-walled, steel-belted monument to good intentions gone awry.

The tires were unloaded there in 1972 to create an artificial reef that could attract a rich variety of marine life, and to free up space in clogged landfills. But decades later, the idea has proved a huge ecological blunder. Little sea life has formed on the tires. Some of the tires that were bundled together with nylon and steel have broken loose and are scouring the ocean floor across a swath the size of 31 football fields. Tires are washing up on beaches. Thousands have wedged up against a nearby natural reef, blocking coral growth and devastating marine life.

"The really good idea was to provide habitat for marine critters so we could double or triple marine life in the area. It just didn't work that way," said Ray McAllister, a professor of ocean engineering at Florida Atlantic University who was instrumental in organizing the project. "I look back now and see it was a bad idea." In fact, similar problems have been reported at tire reefs worldwide. "They're a constantly killing coral-destruction machine," said William Nuckols, coordinator for Coastal America, a federal group involved in organizing a cleanup effort that includes Broward County biologists, state scientists and Army and Navy salvage divers. Florida Gov. Charlie Crist's proposed budget includes $2 million to help gather up and remove the tires. The military divers would do their share of the work at no cost to the state by making it part of their training. A month long pilot project is set for June. The full-scale salvage operation is expected to run through 2010 at a cost to the state of about $3.4 million.

McAllister helped put together the ill-fated reef project with the approval of the US Army Corps of Engineers. He helped raise several thousand dollars (the county also chipped in), organized hundreds of volunteers with boats and barges, and got tires from Goodyear. Goodyear also donated equipment to bind and compress the tires, and the Goodyear blimp even dropped a gold-painted tire into the ocean in a ceremonial start to the project. The tire company issued a press release at the time that proclaimed the reef would "provide a haven for fish and other aquatic species," and noted the "excellent properties of scrap tires as reef material." It was a disappointment, just like other tire reefs created off coastal states and around the world in recent decades.

"We've literally dumped millions of tires in our oceans," said Jack Sobel, an Ocean Conservancy scientist. "I believe that people who were behind the artificial tire reef promotions actually were well-intentioned and thought they were doing the right thing. In hindsight, we now realize that we made a mistake."

No one can say with certainty why the idea doesn't work, but one problem is that, unlike large ships that have been sunk for reefs, tires are too light. They can be swept away by the tides and powerful storms before marine life has a chance to attach. Some scientists also believe the rubber leaches toxins. Virginia tried it several decades ago. But Hurricane Bonnie in 1998 ripped the tires loose, and they washed up in North Carolina. New Jersey scientists thought they had a solution to the weight problem. In 1986, the state began a small reef project with about 1,000 tires split in half, bound together and weighted with concrete. It didn't work. Pieces of rubber broke loose and floated free.

"We had to go up and down the coast of New Jersey and collect 50 to 100 of those pieces that were all along the beaches," said Hugh Carberry of New Jersey's Department of Environmental Protection. The state then tried stacking tires ten-high and filling the cylindrical center with concrete. Each stack weighed about a ton. While the tires stayed in place, scientists soon learned they did not have enough surface area for marine life to attach, so they switched to using concrete balls. Indonesia and Malaysia mounted enormous tire reef programs back in the 1980s and are just now seeing the consequences in littered beaches and reef damage, Sobel said.

Most states have stopped using tires to create reefs, but they continue to wash up worldwide. In 2005, volunteers for the Ocean Conservancy's annual international coastal cleanup removed more than 11,000 tires. The tires retrieved from the waters off Fort Lauderdale will be ground up for use in road projects and burned for fuel, among other uses. "It's going to be a huge job bringing them all up," said Michael Sole, chief of the state Department of Environmental Protection. "It's vigorous work. You have to dig the tires out of the sand."

GREEK POLICE CLASH WITH ANARCHISTS IN THESSALONIKI

From an article on anarchistnews.org

Anarchist youths clashed with riot police for more than three hours in the northern Greek city of Thessaloniki hurling rocks and dozens of petrol bombs outside a university building, authorities said. No injuries were reported.

The youths were protesting plans to relax a law that prohibits police from entering university grounds. The ban is often exploited during violent public protests. One man was arrested and minor damage was caused to nearby buildings. Police used tear gas against some 250 youths, who had entered the grounds of Thessaloniki University and later confronted riot police guarding a nearby conference center.

It was the latest act of violence involving anarchist groups, which have stepped up a campaign of arson and other attacks in Athens and Thessaloniki. The previous day, anarchist youths attacked the Athens headquarters of Greece's largest labor union, the GSEE, using rocks, sledgehammers and petrol bombs to damage the building's entrance. GSEE leader Yiannis Panagopoulos, who was leaving the building at the time, escaped unharmed.

COLOMBIA SEEKS EIGHT IN CHIQUITA TERRORIST SCANDAL

By Eoin O'Carroll from an article in *The Christian Science Monitor*

The Colombian government says that it will likely seek the extradition of eight unnamed people affiliated with the US banana giant Chiquita Brands International for their alleged involvement in the company's payments to and arms trafficking with a violent right-wing paramilitary group. The *Chicago Tribune* reported that Colombia's chief federal prosecutor, Mario Iguaran, has formally requested from the US Justice Department documents relating to Chiquita's payment of $1.7 million to the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (known as the AUC, by its Spanish initials) a group that the United States labels a terrorist organization. Chiquita pleaded guilty in US federal court to making payments to the AUC, and agreed to pay a $25 million fine, payable over five years. As part of the plea agreement, the US government will not publicly identify the senior Chiquita executives who approved the illegal payments.

Speaking in Bogotá, Mr. Iguaran denied Chiquita's claims that the payments were made under duress. "The relationship was not one of the extortionist and the extorted but a criminal relationship," Iguaran told a handful of foreign correspondents in an interview.

"It's a much bigger, more macabre plan," he added. "Who wouldn't know what an illegal armed group like the AUC does...by exterminating and annihilating its enemies. When you pay a group like this you are conscious of what they are doing." The Associated Press reported that Mr. Iguaran said in an interview with a Colombian radio station that he will demand that the United States hand over the eight suspects, whose identities have not been disclosed by the US government. "They must be judged in Colombia," Iguaran said.

According to the US Department of Justice, Chiquita began making payments to the AUC in 1997 through its Colombian shipping operation, Banadex. The payments began when the AUC's then-leader, Carlos Castaño, met with a senior Banadex executive and implied that failure to make payments would result in physical harm to the company's workers and property. The United States designated the AUC a foreign terrorist organization on September 10, 2001. Despite warnings from lawyers who advised the company to leave Colombia, Chiquita continued to pay the group. In April 2003, the company's board of directors learned of the payments, who later that month confessed to the Department of Justice, who told Chiquita to stop paying. Nevertheless, the payments continued through February 2004. Additionally, according to a report by the Organization of American States, in 2001 Banadex helped divert 3,000 Nicaraguan AK-47 rifles and millions of rounds of ammunition to the AUC.

Chiquita sold Banadex, its most profitable operation, to a Colombian buyer in June 2004. The news comes in the midst of a major political scandal in Colombia that has linked many members of the country's political leadership to right-wing death squads. Adam Isacson, an analyst at the Center for International Policy, a human rights advocacy group, sees Colombia's extradition request as a political move to burnish Bogotá's image domestically. He writes:

"The call for Chiquita executives' extradition also taps into a commonly felt frustration among Colombians. Many see their government handing over Colombian citizens to face long jail sentences in the United States, but believe that US citizens accused of trafficking drugs or supporting armed groups in Colombia—including rogue US military personnel who have dealt in drugs or weapons—get slaps on the wrist, such as fines or a few months in prison.

"Either way, if the Colombian government wishes to begin punishing foreign executives whose corporations have paid "protection money" to illegal armed groups, it is within its rights to do so—but it may find itself extraditing a lot of people. Such payments are widely believed to have been commonplace for decades."

Journalist Amy Goodman, however, says that Colombian authorities have every right to single out Chiquita, formerly known as United Fruit. In her syndicated column she cites the company's history of right-wing violence in Latin America, which includes helping to orchestrate the 1954 overthrow of Guatemala's democratically elected president and the 1928 massacre of trade unionists in northwestern Colombia. "A $25-million fine to a multibillion-dollar corporation like Chiquita is a mere slap on the wrist, the cost of doing business. Presidents like George W. Bush and Uribe, businessmen first, while squabbling over extraditions, would never lose track of their overarching shared goal of a stridently pro-corporate, military-supported so-called free-trade regime...That next organic, fair-trade banana you buy just might save a life."

The online magazine *Slate* points out that Chiquita pleaded guilty to the very same crime for which John Walker Lindh, the so-called American Taliban, is serving a 20-year sentence.

MOHAWK GRANDMOTHER REMAINS IN HIDING, DEFYING ARREST WARRANT

By Hillary Lindsay from an article on www.dominionpaper.ca

A Mohawk woman from the Akwesasne Community remains in hiding, defying an arrest warrant from the Superior Court of Ontario in Cornwall. "Katenies" (whose Mohawk name means "she changes things around") refused to appear in court on customs and border violations this past January 18, 2007. Instead, she served her own "Motion to Dismiss," questioning the jurisdiction of the courts and border officials over sovereign Mohawk peoples and their land.

Katenies is a mother and grandmother—her third grandchild was born just 5 days ago on February 28—and a researcher with Mohawk Nation News. She and her family—including her daughter and grandchildren—have been harassed by border officials, in various incidents that date back to 2003. To visit her daughter, Katenies needs to make a simple two-minute drive, but that drive takes her through two provinces, one state, and two countries.

If captured by the police, Katenies faces possible pre-trial detention until her court date in August 2007. Katenies vows to continue to defy the courts until the jurisdiction question is answered; in her words: "It's the Crown, the courts and the police that are the frauds, and it's they who are in violation of the law."

Katenies remains out of sight, somewhere on Turtle Island.

ANIMAL FAT COULD BE SPARK FOR BIODIESEL

By Christopher Leonard, *Associated Press*

DEXTER, Mo. – Jerry Bagby is typical of the oil men who are prospecting for a fortune in the Midwestern biofuels boom. He's convinced there's oil in these hills—and he's found a well that no one else is using.

Bagby and a longtime friend have cobbled together $5 million to build a new biodiesel plant on the lonely croplands outside this southeast Missouri town. They're betting they can hit paydirt by exploiting a generally overlooked natural resource that's abundant in these parts—chicken fat. There's a virtual gusher of the stuff at a nearby Tyson Foods Inc. poultry plant. Currently, the low-quality fat is shipped out of state to be rendered and used as a cheap ingredient in pet food, soap and other products. Bagby and his partner, Harold Williams, plan to refine the gooey substance, mix it with soybean oil, and produce about 3 million gallons of biodiesel annually.

Today, only a tiny fraction of US biodiesel is made from chicken fat, but that seems likely to change. The rising cost of soybean oil—which accounts for roughly 90 percent of all biodiesel fuel stock—is pushing the industry to exploit cheap and plentiful animal fats. The nation's biggest meat corporations have taken notice. Tyson Foods announced in November it has established a renewable energy division that will be up and running in 2007. Competitors Perdue Farms Inc. and Smithfield Foods Inc. are making similar moves. As meatpackers enter the field, they bring massive amounts of fuel stock that could make biodiesel cheaper and more plentiful.

"The shift to animal fat as a fuel stock could be key to making the budding biodiesel industry a reliable fuel source for US trucking fleets," said Vernon Eidman, a professor of economics at the University of Minnesota who has extensively studied the biofuels industry. Eidman estimates that within five years, the United States will produce 1 billion gallons of biodiesel, and half of it will be made from animal fat. By that time soybean-based biodiesel will account for about 20 percent of the total, he said.

Cheaper by the Pound

For fuel refiners like Bagby, the allure of animal fat is clear. Soybean oil costs 33 cents a pound while chicken fat costs 19 cents. He only plans to include soybean oil in his blend because it adds necessary lubrication for engine parts. "Soybean oil is more expensive than other products, so we just use enough of it to make the system run clean," Bagby said, gesturing toward a row of pipes and vats being installed in his new refinery.

For companies like Tyson, the attraction is simple. Being the nation's biggest meat company, Tyson is also the biggest producer of leftover fat from chicken, cattle and hogs. Tyson is keeping the specifics of its renewable fuels division under tight wraps. But Tyson Vice President Jeff Webster told a recent investment conference the potential is clear. Tyson produces about 2.3 billion pounds of chicken fat annually from its poultry plants. That's about 300 million gallons that could be converted to fuel.

The market for biodiesel and ethanol really started to boom in August 2005, after passage of the Federal Energy Policy Act, experts say. The bill set a new standard requiring the US to use 7 billion gallons of renewable fuels by 2012. "While it's always been cheaper, animal fat was initially overlooked as a biodiesel fuel stock because of its uneven quality," Eidman said. "When the energy bill passed, soybean oil was already widely sold as a food additive. Biodiesel refiners could depend on its quality because the oil was marketed and certified under strict guidelines.

"Animal fat also has its technical drawbacks. It clouds up at higher temperatures than soy-based biodiesel, which means it might thicken up when used in colder, northern cities," Eidman said. "That might limit distribution to southern areas where temperatures don't often drop below 40 degrees or so."

While these factors kept animal fat in the background, the biodiesel industry has hit a turning point. Increasing demand for soybean oil as a fuel and as a food is making the price creep up. It now makes economic sense to invest in new technology to process animal fat into usable form as a fuel stock.

Grabbing the Market

Tyson and Perdue are already experimenting with biodiesel. Both companies have started using biodiesel in their trucking fleets. Salisbury, Maryland-based Perdue is also selling soybean oil as a biodiesel fuel stock through the company's Grain and Oilseed Division. The company also said this summer it's studying plans to build its own biofuels plants or invest in others. Smithfield Foods has established its own biofuels division. The Smithfield BioEnergy group is studying how to turn hog waste into fuel and has also started producing biodiesel from vegetable oil. The company didn't comment on the division, but recent financial filings say the biodiesel program is still losing money because of startup costs.

Having a massive new source of fuel stock is a welcome development for the biodiesel industry, said Amber Thurlo Pearson, a spokeswoman for the National Biodiesel Board. "More biodiesel in the marketplace could help make biodiesel's cost even more competitive with diesel fuel," Pearson said. The board estimates that US biodiesel production is tripling annually, going from 25 million gallons in 2004 to 75 million gallons last year. The final tally for 2006 should be between 150 million and 225 million. Biodiesel costs about $1 a gallon more to produce than conventional diesel, but federal tax breaks for fuel distributors help hide that cost from consumers.

Bagby said his plant will be up and running by the end of January. His equipment can refine soybean oil, cottonseed oil and animal fat. That gives him flexibility to use whatever's cheapest on the commodity markets. His first batches will be made from soybean oil because it's easiest to get the equipment calibrated. After that? Soybean oil has a long way to drop before it's as affordable as chicken fat. "You can see the difference in cost," he said.

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BACKLASH GROWS AGAINST FREE TRADE

By Mark Trumbull, from an article in *The Christian Science Monitor*

Worries about the dark side of free trade are surfacing in the United States in ways that could affect the course of globalization worldwide.

Don't expect an outright retreat from global commerce just yet, but it is becoming more likely that the US will act to temper and manage its impact. The reason: Free-trade brush fires have recently erupted on economic and political fronts:

• This week, the Commerce Department said America's trade deficit rose to $764 billion in 2006, as imports outstripped exports by a record amount for a fifth straight year.
• Democrats are in control of Congress, with new lawmakers in their ranks who are especially eager to do something about what they see as unfair trade practices by China. Bipartisan bills introduced this week could result in retaliatory tariffs or revocation of China's trade status with the US.

"There was a time ten years ago when it seemed like globalization was consensual, and there were very few remaining questions about whether it was...a good thing," says Jeffry Frieden, an expert on global economics at Harvard University. The reality, he says, includes a caveat: Trade "can make everyone better off, so long as you compensate the losers."

Concern about globalization is hardly limited to the US. From Europe to Latin America to China, the pattern is the same: Not everyone feels better off, and in those regions, political consequences can include riots or the rise of nationalist governments. But America, which as the world's largest economy has led the march toward expanding trade for decades, remains an important influence on the world.

Most trade experts don't foresee an outright reversal of the trend. The world's biggest economies are now heavily reliant on trade. Exports account for about 40 percent of Germany's economic activity and a similar share in China, according to Joseph Quinlan, a Banc of America investment strategist in New York. But the tenor in the halls of power has changed. Supporters of globalization are expending more energy to defend the concept—often calling for new policies to help compensate workers whose jobs migrate abroad. "[To] retain support for policies of free trade...we need to make sure that the gains and benefits from these powerful, growth-producing forces are broadly shared," Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke said this week in response to a question during congressional testimony.

Trade has always been always destabilizing for the workers in affected industries. What's new is the unprecedented scale and pace of change worldwide. In the 1980s and '90s, China, along with former communist nations and former post-colonial regimes on several continents, joined a global market for labor and goods. Communications technology has been a force of acceleration. This has been hugely beneficial overall, most economists say. But it comes with strains on jobs and wages that are increasingly apparent. In a *USA Today*/Gallup poll last year, nearly two-thirds of respondents said trade "mostly hurts" US workers.

One idea under review on Capitol Hill is wage insurance, which provides income as displaced workers transition toward new careers. The bills focus on trying to level what many lawmakers see as a tilted playing field—especially with export powerhouse China. A bipartisan bill introduced recently would rescind China's Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) status. It is sponsored by Sens. Byron Dorgan (D) of North Dakota, Lindsey Graham (R) of South Carolina, and Sherrod Brown (D) of Ohio. Another new bill, the Fair Currency Act of 2007, classified China as a currency manipulator in violation of US trade law. A tariff boost is threatened under this bill backed by Reps. Duncan Hunter (R) of California and Tim Ryan (D) of Ohio. Meanwhile, the Bush administration and trade advocates in both parties are scrambling to build support for so-called "fast track" authority to negotiate new agreements to expand trade.

"We need to declare a moratorium on new trade agreements until we figure out how to do this right," says Alan Tonelson of the US Business and Industry Council, which represents companies concerned about the erosion of US manufacturing. It remains unclear whether the advocates of a harder line on trade will gain traction. Some economists believe this will be a better year for US exports—and a narrowing in the trade deficit. And that deficit, they say, is not in itself a sign of economic decline. But it could be unsustainable if other nations grow less willing to finance that deficit by lending to the US. "The real key is to take advantage of our educational system to acquire higher-value skills" and the jobs that go with them, says Paul Kasriel, an economist at the Northern Trust Co. in Chicago.

IRAN "TO LIMIT I.A.E.A. COOPERATION"

From an article on aljazeera.net

Iran has said it will limit its co-operation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the United Nations' nuclear watchdog. Gholamhossein Elham, the government's spokesman, said on Sunday that Iran was taking the move in response to the UN's decision to impose new sanctions against Tehran on Saturday.

"After this illegal resolution was passed against Iran last night, it forced the government to act based on parliament's decision regarding the cooperation level with the agency and suspend parts of its activities with the agency," Elham told Iranian state television. "The government in a cabinet meeting today decided to suspend code 1-3 of minor arrangements of the safeguards." He was referring to the part of the International Atomic Energy Agency's code which specifies that countries should inform the agency of any new steps and decisions made in its nuclear program.

Elham said Iran would only reconsider this decision if its nuclear case was returned to the IAEA from the UN Security Council where the file is now being handled. "This will continue until Iran's nuclear case is referred back to the IAEA from the UN Security Council," he said.

The UN Security Council voted unanimously on Saturday to impose additional penalties on Iran for its nuclear ambitions by targeting Tehran's arms exports, a state-owned bank and the elite Revolutionary Guards. Limited sanctions were initially imposed on Iran in December after it refused to halt uranium enrichment, a process which can be used to make power station fuel or material for warheads, which is what the West believes is Iran's ultimate goal.

Iran, the world's fourth largest oil exporter, says it wants only to generate electricity and to preserve its huge oil and gas reserves for export.

DAVID HICKS BECOMES FIRST GUANTANAMO PRISONER TO PLEAD GUILTY

From an article on www.democracynow.org

The Australian citizen David Hicks has become the first Guantanamo prisoner to plead guilty under the Military Commissions Act passed last year. Hicks entered the guilty plea as part of a deal with military prosecutors. He has been held at Guantanamo Bay for the past five years.

The US government had originally accused Hicks of conspiracy to commit murder, conspiracy to engage in acts of terrorism, attempted murder, and aiding the enemy, but only ended up charging him with a single crime—providing material support for terrorism. Pentagon officials say Hicks will likely serve his sentence in Australia. Hicks has said he was sodomized, beaten, and subjected to forced injections while in US custody. The military denies the allegations.

Hicks appeared in the courtroom wearing khaki prison fatigues and with hair down to his chest—grown, his lawyer said, to pull over his eyes at night to keep out the light and allow him to get to sleep. Before the hearing, Hicks was allowed a two-hour reunion with his father and sister.

As the proceedings got under way, Hicks was formally charged and initially deferred entering a plea. But later on his lawyers told the judge he was pleading guilty. Hicks' guilty plea came after a military judge barred two of Hicks' lawyers from the court proceedings. One of the attorneys had refused to sign a document pledging to follow court rules that hadn't been defined. Legal observers are criticizing the decision.

U.N.: MILLIONS MAY GO HUNGRY IN NORTH KOREA

From an article by Audra Ang, Associated Press

North Korea is facing one of its biggest food shortages in the past decade with millions of people going hungry because of a poor harvest and a huge drop in donor aid, a UN official said Wednesday.

Anthony Banbury, the Asian regional director for the World Food Program who recently returned from a six-day trip to North Korea, said officials there told him they faced a food gap of 1 million tons. He said they requested that the agency expand its assistance—a rare admission and plea for help from the secretive Stalinist regime. The weak harvest in 2006, disastrous summer flooding, and a 75 percent fall in donor assistance have dealt severe blows to the impoverished nation, he said.

"If donors do not respond to the request, millions of people are going to go hungry," Banbury told a news conference.

North Korea has relied on foreign food aid since natural disasters and mismanagement devastated its economy in the mid-1990s and led to a famine estimated to have killed some 2 million people. But the secretive regime of North Korean leader Kim Jong Il restricted activities of aid agencies and pressed them to reduce the size of their foreign staffs in the country.

In past years, the WFP fed about 6.5 million people annually in the North, but scaled back its program last year to 1.9 million people after Pyongyang requested in 2005 to switch its emphasis from food aid to development assistance, claiming that food supplies were adequate. In reality, the Rome-based WFP has since been able to reach only 700,000 people—about 3 percent of the North's population of 23 million—because of its smaller operation and lack of funding. Although no large-scale famines or deaths are predicted, "We are heading in the wrong direction," he said.

"A lot of effort was made in the last decade to improve the situation and many gains were achieved," Banbury said. "Now, unfortunately, we face a situation where those gains may be reversed."

Two years ago, the North said it could feed its people with its improved harvests and help from neighboring China and South Korea, the two biggest helpers. But China's aid has since shrunk to about 10,000 tons a month, from close to 500,000 tons in 2005, Jean-Pierre de Margerie, WFP's country representative in North Korea, said Wednesday. Seoul stopped aid after the North fired a series of missiles in July and kept it on hold in the wake of Pyongyang's October atomic test, but resumed official economic assistance this week by sending a shipload of fertilizer. However, South Korea plans to hold off on resuming rice shipments until after mid-April to make sure the North carries out its promise to close its main nuclear reactor as part of a landmark Feb. 13 deal crafted during ongoing six-nation disarmament talks. The other participants are the United States, China, Japan and Russia.

"We can't wait... The lean season is upon us," Banbury said. "The needs of the people are separate from the political talks. There ought not to be a direct linkage between those talks and the food security situation in the country."

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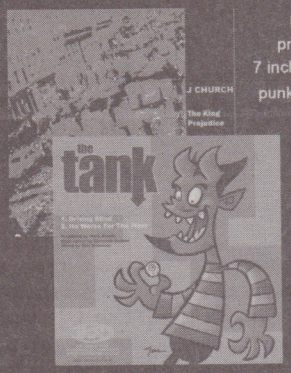

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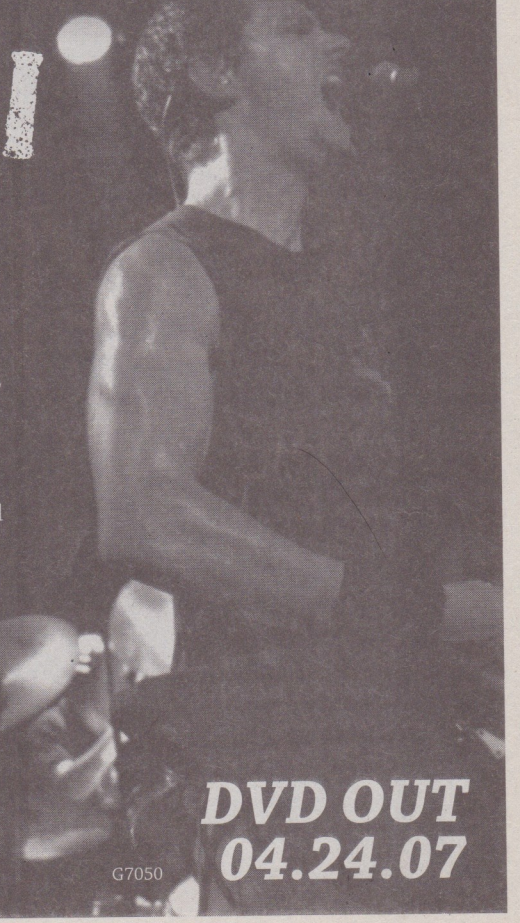

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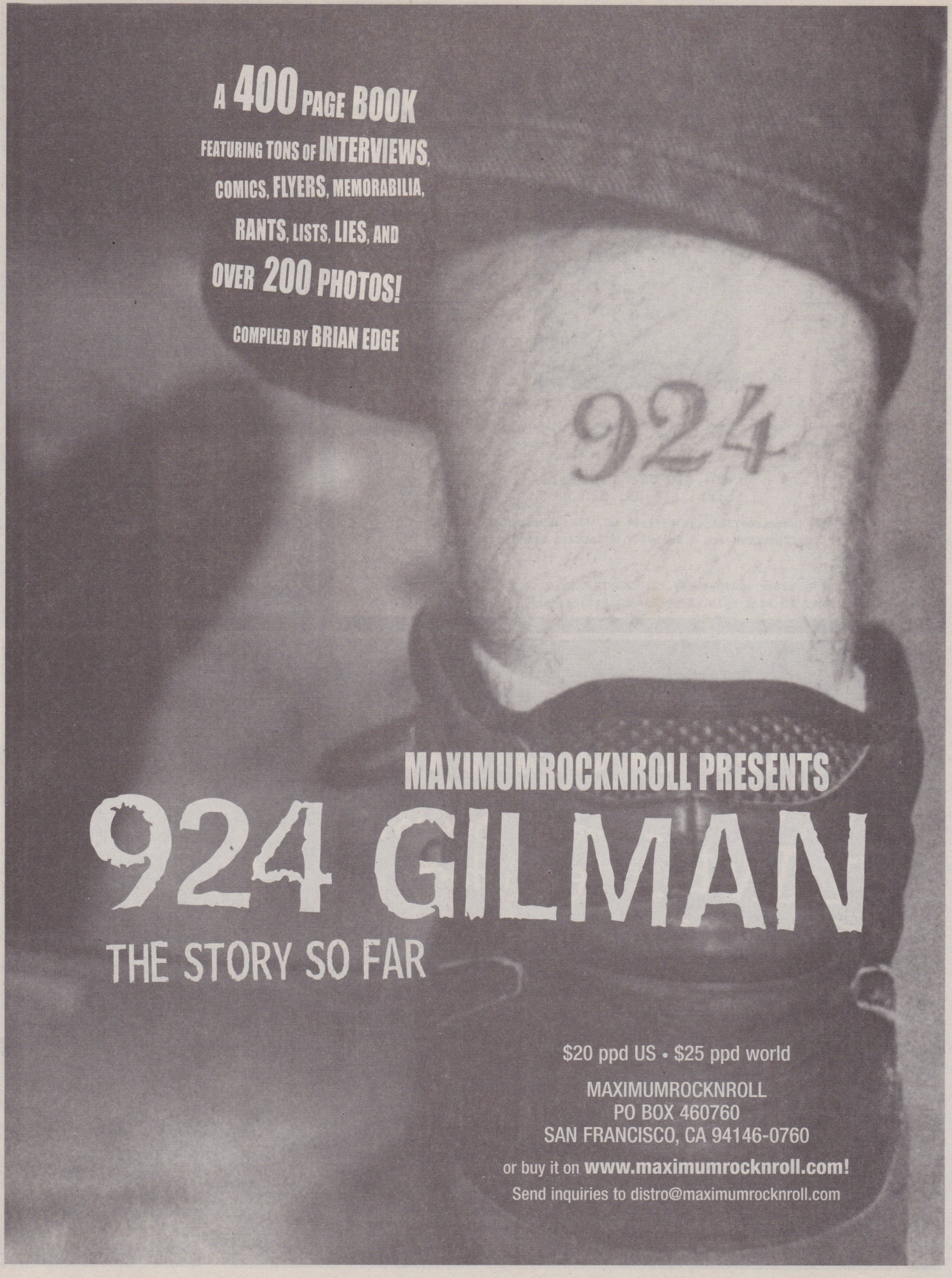
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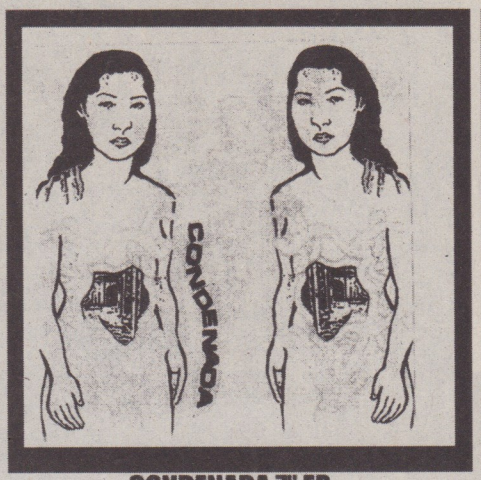

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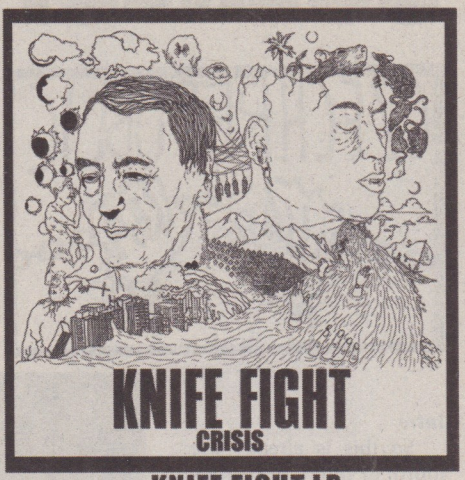

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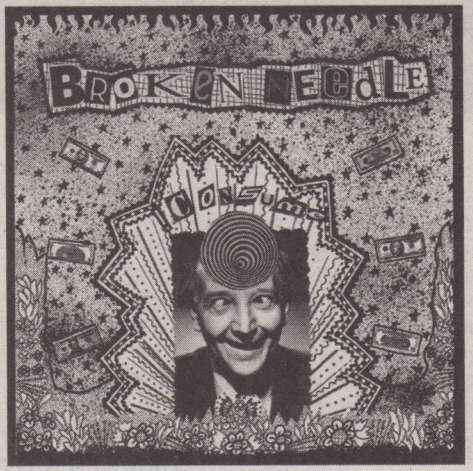

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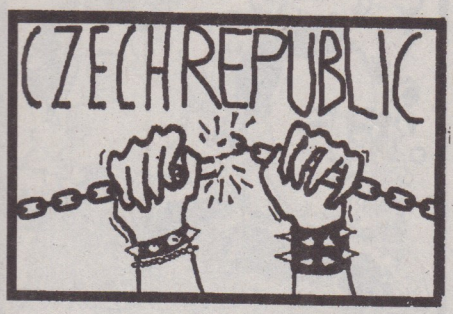
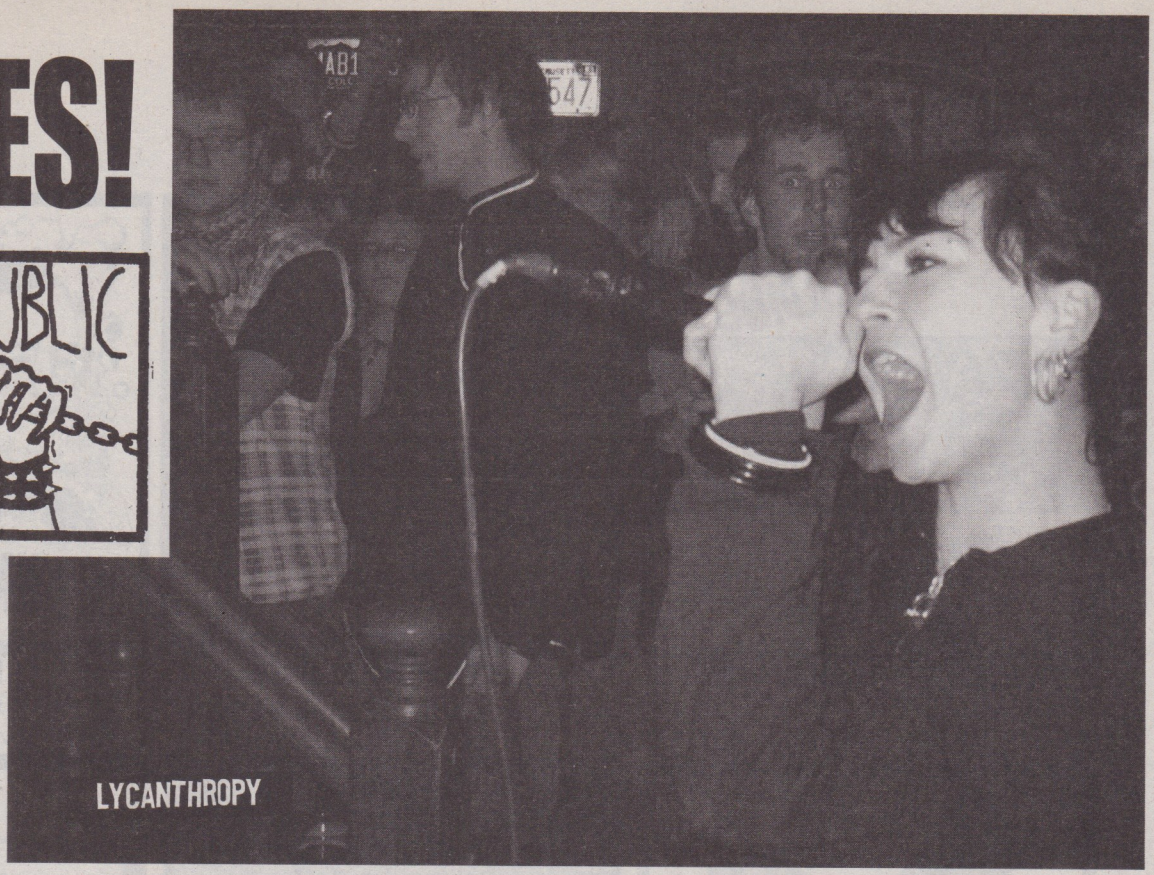




Intro

So this is already the fourth or fifth Czech scene report I've written for this zine. Maybe you read the previous one, which got printed back in May 2006 in *MRR* #276. Some exciting things have taken place here since the last time you've heard from me: lots of new records, crazy gigs, ass-kicking zines and killer bands! First, some important news:

On January 16th, 2007, the US government officially asked the new (it was installed on the same day) Czech government for permission to build a US army base in Czech. At first they thought about having a missiles base here, but in the end they asked "only" for the anti-missile radar army base. It is planned to be built 40 km south of Prague. It's a huge shock when you keep in mind that we managed to kick the previous occupation force, the Russian army, out of Czechoslovakia back in 1991, and the politicians always used to promise that it was the last time there would be foreign army bases here. But now in 2007 it seems to be very different as the major political (right-wing) party totally supports this idea. We will see what the Green Party (which took a few seats in the Czech government for the first time ever) will do about it. At least the public [vote?] about this issue should take the place, but again most of politicians and mainstream media are totally against it and want only the government and parliament to decide on this. And to add insult to injury there's no huge public pressure against the US army base, since most of people are totally pacified by their consumerist lifestyles and general apathy towards anything remotely political. The loudest opposition comes from the "No To Bases" initiative, which sadly seems to be strictly controlled by young members of Communist party. Waving red flags with hammer-and-sickle at every demo against the proposed US army base isn't going to help to gain much public support, I am afraid. This is the usual strategy of Bolshevik/Stalinist groups everywhere: hijack popular or emerging protest movements and use them for their own purposes. It sucks.

Now for something totally different: I think that at least some of you are familiar with Prague's own **007 Club** located in the area of the university campuses at Strahov Hill. Its existence dates back to the 1970s at least, and since the '90s it's the most notorious place for hardcore/punk shows in Prague. Not dozens, but probably hundreds of US bands have played there, from BORN AGAINST and AGNOSTIC FRONT to DROPDEAD, STATE OF FEAR, CODE 13 and CAUSTIC CHRIST. At the end of last year the city authorities found that the noise level is to high (there are student rooms right above the stage) and started to threaten the club with closure if they wouldn't build better sound-proofing. The costs of this are estimated at tens of thousands of dollars, which is impossible to raise right now. The truth is that the club is not any kind of DIY space, it's a privately owned commercial club, but the guy running it treats the organizers totally fairly and it's the only stable hardcore/punk space in Prague today. So a series of benefit shows were organized in early January, when hardcore/punk (LUMEN, GNU, THEMA 11, SEE YOU IN HELL) and indie/commercial bands played the "Week for 007." In the end around $9,000 (US) was collected to cover the costs of repair-works. That's great, as it seems to be just enough to start the work on soundproofing the space. Let's hope this will help to keep the 007 Club open!

Vinyl mania!

A good number of Czech records (and a couple of CDs/CD-Rs) were released in 2006. Let's talk more about them!

GRIDE/LYCANTHROPHY split EP (Insane Society Records) is definitely a record of the year for me! After something like five years there's finally new stuff (if you don't count their split EP with LAHAR from 2005, but these were only cover songs) from GRIDE bringing you a lethal dose of ultra-fast, sick, extreme hardcore with hyper-technical drumming! Sounds like a collision of HELLNATION, YACOPSAE, and DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN (I hate the last band mentioned, but I think that luckily GRIDE do take only an ounce of inspiration from them). LYCANTHROPHY, on the other side, plays more down-to-earth extreme hardcore/powerviolence with non-stop blast beats and inhumane female vocals. I was positively surprised by their side, as their sound kills and they have really decent political lyrics this time. It has a full-color cover and a very interesting anti-religion article by GRIDE's singer, Iny, (also translated to English) in the insert. I really can't recommend this record enough. Don't miss it if you are a fastcore/grind freak!

GREX/RABIES split EP (multi-label release, contact RABIES and their Exit Prod. label) is another record coming from the Southern Czech area, where GRIDE, LAHAR, INGROWING, and couple more good fast HC/grind bands reside. It's already RABIES' fourth split EP! This band plays fucking fast and raw hardcore, sounding like some of the best HELLNATION stuff to me. They have two bass guitars, and some songs have great catchy punk breakdowns before they jump into another fastcore storm. Eight songs on their side, this tells enough. GREX plays deep, guttural crustcore with dual vocals—again, really raw and brutal stuff. I like them too. Both bands recorded at Hellsound studio, which is the place where more and more good Czech bands record their material (LAHAR, FESTA DESPERATO, RISPOSTA, GRIDE...) and the sound just

rips!

HIBAKUSHA – *Morula* LP and *Nase Smrtici Koverky...* CD-R (another multi-label release, write directly to the band as they put both these release on their own Killing Art label as well): HIBAKUSHA is for sure one of the most underrated bands in Czech. For a band playing since the mid '90s, they don't get the recognition they deserve. Their debut LP is the vinyl version of a CD released back in 2005 and it has 16 tracks of pure crustcore butchery with a little touch of grindcore and punk. Sometimes they do sound like Czech version of DISRUPT, honestly! Also it's interesting to read their lyrics as many of them deal with animal exploitation, nature protection, etc. The title of their second release, the CD-R, translates as "Our deadly covers..." and it comes with a professionally printed cover. You can hear 17 cover songs of their favorite bands, but with all the lyrics translated and sung in Czech language, and there are some special guests from local bands helping with vocals. Bands like SORE THROAT, AGATHOCLES, DISRUPT, GENOCIDE SS, UNHOLY GRAVE, 3 WAY CUM, RESIST or MOTORHEAD were covered, some more obscure older Czech bands as well, like TELEX, HEARTLINE or MRTVA BUDOUCNOST (fuck, my own, thanx guys! haha). HIBAKUSHA comes from the northeastern part of the country—the brutal ex-mining/industrial Ostrava region, which is also home to a good number of other grind/crust/fast HC bands, like DISFIGURED CORPSE, MALIGNANT TUMOUR, SHEEVA YOGA, DISNEY, CEREBRAL TURBULENCY, KAHKASHAN... there has been a cool scene since the early '90s!

DEPRESY MOUSE/KONFIDENT split EP (Project Production) was released just few weeks ago. Both are not-so-well-known bands from the area of Roznov pod Radhostem/VRAH Club playing very different styles. DEPRESY MOUSE put out a split EP with HIBAKUSHA few years ago and they have ex-HOMO CONSUMENS drummer playing bass. Their style is something like messy grindcore/extreme HC with some heavy slow parts... well, I am not so much into it. KONFIDENT on the other side has pleasantly surprised me with their ultra-fast hardcore/punk with slashing guitars, high-pitched vocals, and machine-gun drumming. Really great band! While their older recordings sounded to me like RESIST, today they are way more extreme (but still you can hear punk roots there).

V/A – *Common Life II* LP (Dead Heroes Records): Fuck, this is what an international compilation should look like! Compiling bands from different corners of the world, exposing new, young bands that otherwise would have not much chance to have their stuff put on vinyl... Russian bands like GEORGE HARRISON and CAPTAINS AMERICA, Macedonian bands FPO and CHOICE OF MY OWN, LOW VISION from Japan, L.E.A.R.N. from Italy or DUCKSTAB from UK just floored me! Also SMD from Los Angeles sound pretty good! This is basically thrash/fastcore-only compilation, which could have easily been released on 625. Most of the bands here are totally rad and the record also comes with really decent full-color cover and it's pressed on red vinyl. It looks and sounds so good and I was really excited about it. Only one band from Czech is included here: STILL STRONG, who are kind of obscure with only very few live shows played during their five years existence. In fact, I think that maybe more people in Russia (where they had their demo tape released) who know them than here in Czech! They're also one of the very few bands in Czech (besides STOLEN LIVES) with this youth crew/625 thrash influence. The label who put this compilation out used to be called Drugs Kill Your Mind before, I don't know why they changed the name, when the people behind it are still the same and the music they put out as well. Doesn't matter, the important thing is, that they continue to release killer records!

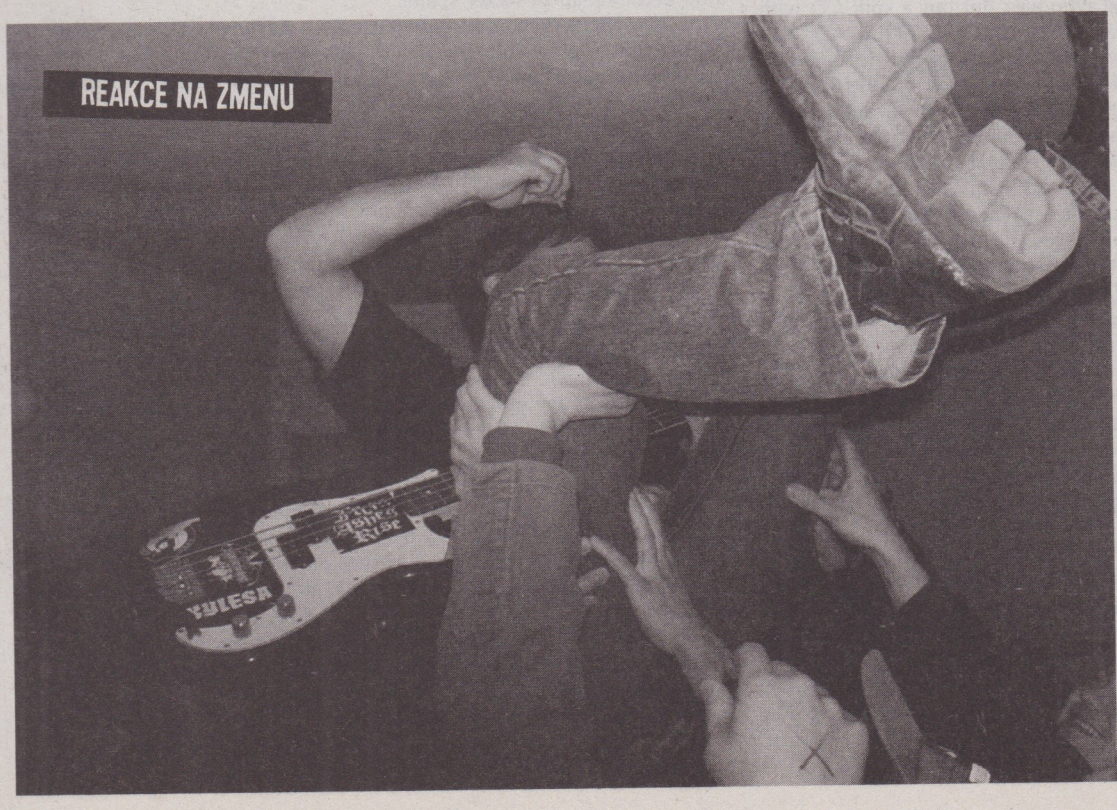
NEEDFUL THINGS – *Dead Point* LP (Nightmare Records): The vinyl version of their CD released back in 2005. What can I say, another Czech band playing for ten years or more not getting recognition despite a long line of vinyl released (split EP's with EXISTENCH, WADGE, MESRINE, SQUASH BOWELS, etc.), and several European tours (with SEWN SHUT, ENTRAILS MASSACRE, SQUASH BOWELS...) behind them. Pure old school grindcore holocaust, if you like old NAPALM DEATH (they also cover their song here), you should be satisfied.

JOHN BALL/VAS SZUZANE split LP (multi-label release, try Samuel Records) is a cooperation of two bands usually branded with "emo" tag. JOHN BALL definitely sounds like some of the better emo bands from the French scene of early/mid '90s, also with strong, passionate Czech vocals. VAS SZUZANE plays darker and heavier music similar to currently popular Czech bands like LUMEN or THEMA 11.

STOLEN LIVES/TIME OF MY LIFE split EP (multi-label release, I put some money into this too, but I already sold all my copies, try to contact the first band if you are interested) pairs two young bands together on one piece of plastic. Both play sort of youth crew hardcore full of energy, I enjoy STOLEN LIVES little more with their powerful hardcore assault influenced by '90s wave of European hardcore bands like HIGHSCORE, DEMON SYSTEM 13 or VITAMIN X. Also great vocals in Czech and strong political lyrics (pro-choice, against religion...)! TIME OF MY LIFE is from Slovakia and they play their hardcore with more melody, maybe it's a little similar to Finland's ENDSTAND.

KOBRA 11/ PRUMYSLOVA SMRT split EP was mentioned last time too, and again I put some cash into it with my Hluboka Orba label, but it's also sold out from my address (write to PRUMYSLOVA SMRT for info about any remaining copies as more than 10 labels cooperated on this). KOBRA 11 kills you with heavy hammering hardcore not unlike MONSTER X, while PRUMYSLOVA SMRT is pure extreme hardcore butchery (with a DS13 cover). Totally great stuff on both sides! Again, two newer and not so known bands and you should definitely check them out.

FESTA DESPERATO – *Novy Babylon* EP (multi-label release, try Phobia Records): I guess that I've raved about this record already so much in my last report (when I only had an



SCENES!

advance tape of it), so I will keep it very short: this is probably the best crust record ever released here. If you like FRAMTID, WORLD BURNS TO DEATH or ATROCIOUS MADNESS with very intelligent lyrics you cannot go wrong here! Watch out for the vinyl version of their third demo tape, called Zivot Ve Hrichu (translates as "Life At Sinn") on a 7" EP released by Nightmare Records very soon. There are plans for a full LP to be recorded in the autumn of 2007. I can't wait!

The **GUIDED CRADLE LP/CD** was mentioned last time as well, but I just want to let you know that it was re-released in Canada by Unrest Records as a gatefold vinyl LP, and Insane Society Records released the CD version of it as a digipack. I haven't heard their already released split EP with INSTINCT OF SURVIVAL on Yellow Dog Records, so I can't comment on it at all. The band is rumored to be working on a second LP and there's talk about a possible US/Canadian tour this summer (after their successful first Euro tour last year).

FLOWERS FOR WHORES – *When Gods Fight for the Flag* EP (Damage Done Records) was released by the same guy who did the GUIDED CRADLE LP originally, and who is also the singer of FLOWERS FOR WHORES. Just don't expect crust butchery here... only two songs of heavy metal-core with tons of changes and breaks and some intricate playing. I can't comment much on it as I don't listen to this stuff at all, but it seems to be pretty good for this style of music.

SHEEVA YOGA – *Hertoteqhue* CD-R (Olga Hepnarova Records) is a brand new release by this band who also put out a split CD with SHELL SHOCK recently (but I haven't heard it yet). SHEEVA YOGA plays a crazy mix of spastic extreme hardcore, power violence, jazz and some more weird influences. Think about bands like MEXICAN POWER AUTHORITY, SPAZZ or LE SCRAWL. Now I know that a description like that can turn some people off, but trust me, this band does this mix really well and they are not so experimental. It's mostly total blast-beat obliteration from start to finish. With ten solid years behind them and a few European tours (mostly cruising through German or Dutch squats almost unnoticed playing for 10 people every night), you can talk about another totally underrated band! Their newest output is just a CD-R (but with a professional cover including a thick booklet with some interesting stories about each band they cover, also translated to English) of 14 cover songs of bands who have influenced them. You can find pretty good covers of GUYANA PUNCH LINE, FROM ASHES RISE, 7 MINUTES OF NAUSEA, BEASTIE BOYS, NAPALM DEATH, TELEFON (mid '90s Czech classic, not the French new wave band), DEFAULT, etc. here, and of course of the three above-mentioned bands too. Released on bassplayer's label in total DIY way. I really hope for a full LP release of SHEEVA YOGA's own stuff in 2007—this band definitely deserves it!

DISNEY – *Rum Not Bombs* CD-R (Olga Hepnarova Records) was put out around the time the band celebrated almost ten years of "activity" (well, they haven't been so active during all these years). I think that they originally started as a joke band/side-project of SHEEVA YOGA, but it seems that they're a full-time band now with more gigs and finally with some decent recording. Obviously DISNEY is a mockery of the D-beat trend with lyrics mostly about alcohol consumption and its side effects and their lyrics are sung in Swedish and Finnish language. It's not pure D-beat as they incorporate more influences into it, so I am not totally sure if orthodox crusties would be into them, but if you look for something not so traditional, give this a chance! Also, there are great intros between songs and a well-recorded live set at the end of this disc.

DEGENERACE – *...Slova* CD-R (the name translates as "...Words") is first demo of these young noise maniacs, recorded in their practice room, and if you like the raw and noisy under-produced sounds of old Finnish/Brazil bands, you can't go wrong here. Cover songs of KAAOS and MRTVA BUDOUCNOST (thanx, guys!), a free patch and a really cheap price ($1 US plus postage). The band plans a full EP or split EP; we will see after their singer comes back from his extended holiday spent around the squats of sunny Spain!

COLYMBOSATHON ECPLEPTICOS – *...Z Hlubin* CD-R is another debut demo by a not-so-known band. This time it's just two-man grindcore/power violence action—just bass and drums, so if you've missed the Czech version of bands like GODSTOMPER, BIZARRE X or NO COMPLY, check this out.

6 MAS/MOCOVY KHAMENI split tape (Project Prod.) compiles two more obscure Czech bands, despite the fact that MOCOVY KHAMENI has played since something like 1991. 6 MAS from Ostrava-city plays raw metallic grind/crust, while MK plays chaotic old school grindcore. A nice split (on professionally printed tapes), if you like brutal grind with zero death metal or gore ingredients.

There are some records I haven't heard yet, the **MALIGNANT TUMOUR/GURKHKA split LP/CD** recently released on Insane Society being one of them. MT is rumored to be more rock 'n' roll in the MOTORHEAD vein with nonsense lyrics, while GURKHA from Bristol, England, plays some raw sounding old school UK crust. There is (was?) a limited edition of 66 copies with screen-printed shopping bag and free DVD with footage of both bands' 2006 UK tour.

I also haven't heard the new **LUMEN's *Mondo* CD**, which was anticipated with huge enthusiasm by many, since the band stopped playing in late '90s and has now reformed. Heavy, pounding, slow music like on their previous two long-players I have heard. Released on Day After Records.

A few records are on the way to be released during spring 2007: **STOLEN LIVES EP** (I will co-release it as well, the promo CD-R sounds great), **DEMARCHE EP** (hard-driving crusty street punk from Prague, again, their advance CD-R sounds really good, this will be released on

Hluboka Orba too in cooperation with many other labels, Steve from VISIONS OF WAR drew the cover), **REDGRAVE CD** (one of the very few Czech sludge bands, people from MASSGENOCIDE PROCESS and GOSPEL OF THE FUTURE in the lineup, to be released very soon on Nightmare Records) or **FOOLOCRACY LP** (already split up, but totally great band from the Vrah area, catchy and super driving, punk as fuck, for fans of INNOXIA CORPORA or AD CALENDAS GRAECAS, to be released on Ultima Ratio in just a few days).

THEMA 11 will release their second full LP/CD in April on Insane Society Records. Right now the mastering job is done by Alex Newport (some hip indie producer, I don't know too much about him). THEMA 11 made a huge step from their previous dark and moody sonic landscapes style. I just saw them recently and it's more brutal and sludgy, reminding me of bands like KYLESA a bit. Definitely a band worth checking out with many tours including two gigs in Russia behind them! I think that this spring they will tour UK.

BALACLAVA has their LP recorded as well, but they still wait for more people to send them their own artwork for covers. They came with the cool idea of having each record cover original—painted or photographed by people, who send them their own stuff. They will press just exactly the same number of records as they will receive covers. I think that it's a great DIY idea! After one full EP and one split EP this will finally be a full LP by these old timers playing passionate political hardcore not unlike UNBROKEN or STRUGGLE, also with a strong pro-animal rights/vegan stance. The record's name will be *Creativity*.

There were some rumors about a possible **LAHAR** 10" on some US label, but it seems that nothing came out of it in the end, so the band is slowly working on their debut full LP to be hopefully released in the not-so-distant future through the band members' labels, Samuel and Korek Records, and some cooperation. I saw LAHAR two times during 2006 and they fucking slashed with their fast extreme HC combined with sharp thrash riffs not unlike old KREATOR. Also the drummer is one of the fastest ones around! They really need to release some new stuff! By the way, they toured Germany with GRIDE in September 2006.

Some more releases are planned for later 2007, for example the **LYCANTHROPHY/CATHETER split CD** and the **MASSGENOCIDE PROCESS/DISTRESS split EP**.

Birthdays, obituaries and new bands

As you probably already noticed, a good number of Czech bands celebrated ten or more years of existence in 2006. Seems like the mid '90s were such fertile ground for the new wave of Czech hardcore bands, who have often lasted for a pretty long time despite being almost always ignored by outside world!

MALIGNANT TUMOUR celebrated their anniversary of not ten but fifteen(!) years in their hometown, Ostrava. I wasn't there, but I've heard that the place was sold out with something like 500 people in the audience! MT played several special sets with different line-ups from its early '90s gore-grind beginnings through its early 2000's crust lineup (with two Dutch guys) up to their current, most popular crusty rock 'n' roll style.

GRIDE celebrated ten years of existence last August in a disused boy scout camp in the middle of the dark woods near their hometown of Prachatice. They invited a few guests like RABIES, INGROWING, SEE YOU IN HELL, LAHAR, LYCANTHROPHY, and MALIGNANT TUMOUR, and it was a great party with a few hundred people inside. GRIDE did a special set as well, with their past members playing many old songs plus some special cover songs (VOIVOD, SEPTIC DEATH, etc.).

HIBAKUSHA did not played one, but two shows to celebrate their ten years anniversary, but again, I wasn't there.

ZEMEZLUC had their twenty(!)-year anniversary celebration show (with two drummers playing at the same time!) in Brno's Yacht Club, but I was on a Balkan tour with my band at the same time.

I think that **RABIES, SHEEVA YOGA, THEMA 11** and **BALACLAVA** had their ten-year anniversaries in 2006, but there were no special shows to commemorate this as far as I know.

Some bands stopped their activity in 2006 like HOMO CONSUMENS and YARVAR COOCHA (who share a split EP together, but both are now inactive due some band members' work in Scotland), SPES EREPTA (after the great debut EP two members left the band, recordings for a supposed split LP are still lying around, now they seem to be recruiting new members, so maybe they will continue), 6 MAS or BASTO (also recorded for demo, but nothing released so far).

There are many new bands, I will mention just few of them, and of course when there are some "official" recordings available I will for sure write more! There are KAHKASHAN (revolutionary crust with dual vocals, one of them is drummer of HIBAKUSHA, split EP with some Spanish band in the works), LAKME (passionate emo from Prague, full EP out very soon with DIY hand-made cover), DEVIACE DOBY (crust with female vocals), SAY WHY? (old-school grindcore reminding me some '90s GRIDE stuff), KOMPLEX VINY (not so new band actually, but recently they changed their lineup and style a bit, raw crust punk with brutal low vocals), BOMBENATTACK (raw crust detonation again, with people from LYCANTHROPHY, BASTO and DEGENERACE), RIMMER YOUTH (old school/youth crew hardcore with some BALACLAVA and SPES EREPTA people)...

Brno-city under the ashes!

There's still an active and thriving hardcore/punk scene in my hometown and around, lets talk more about it...

I already mentioned **FESTA DESPERATO** releases, soon they will head down to Hungary and Romania for few shows, sadly no plans for longer foreign tours as one of the guitar players became a father and bought a house in the woods!

ZEMEZLUC was mentioned as well, they nearly split up in 2005 after their guitar player and drummer both left the band leaving the band leader, Shoty, alone again, but soon new people including ex-LOS SOMMROS's (early/mid-'90s Brno's crust legends, haha!) guitar player were found. Now they are back in full action playing regularly and there are plans for new recordings, probably a full EP. Their last stuff is a great live 10" recorded at the Finnish Puntala Rock Fest in summer 2005 and released by Ultima Ratio: you have to see to cover artwork yourself as it's one of the finest pieces of punk art ever, really!

RISPOSTA has added a second guitar, so now they play more in the old UK crust/HELLSHOCK way (before it was pure DOOM tribute!) and they attempted to record for the first time at Hellsound studio. Well, the first recording got damaged due to flooding, but second time they managed to do it properly and it sounds really good! Right now it seems that they will release it as full vinyl LP in a small pressing of 300 copies. I hope to support this release financially as well, as it will be another multi-label release.

MAD PIGS, the local masters of street punk, have recently recorded for their debut CD and split EP, but now they have to look for a new drummer as the guest drummer from ZEMEZLUC left them. They impressed me with hard

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driving, full-of-energy set at the last Killed By Brno Fest. Also their vocals are sung in Czech, so they are a little different from the hordes of other same-sounding street punk bands!

REAKCE NA ZMENU (translated as "Reaction To Change") is a new full-on raw hardcore assault band with ex-FESTA DESPERATO bass player and three younger punx. Fucking great stuff of short and violent explosions,; I like them a lot! They already managed to change their lineup several times; just this weekend they want to record for debut demo.

PRIPYAT is another new band, this time with current FESTA DESPERATO drummer Paaya beating the drums, and two screaming female vocalists. I just saw their debut show recently and was really impressed. They are not very tight yet, but they play really powerful noisy hardcore/punk with cool political lyrics. By the way, Pripyat is the name of a Ukrainian city, which had to be immediately evacuated after the Chernobyl power plant nuclear tragedy. Now it's a scary ghost town!

Two more bands, again not exactly from Brno but from villages around, are **CORE BASTARDS** and **OCKOVANI LISEK**. Both play raw and noisy fast hardcore/crust, but so far have only played a few shows, and I don't know about any releases.

I have not much news about **SCARTO, NAGAIKA, MAC GYVER** and **MORE BAD NEWS**, although the later ones did German tour together with SHEEVA YOGA in 2006. MORE BAD NEWS and NAGAIKA also did a split CD-R together a while ago.

My band, **SEE YOU IN HELL**, toured Japan in April/May 2006, which was obviously a huge experience and our endless thanx go again to Shingo Maeda from Too Circle Records/ENCROACHED for inviting us, and of course to all the other people who helped him/us. An extensive tour report should be printed in the new issue of Profane Existence, so check it out (there should be also free CD coming with the magazine with our new song). In autumn 2006 we did an ultra-short Balkan "tour"; only two shows (Croatia and Serbia) as the third one (in Romania) was thrashed by Nazis. I totally encourage foreign bands to try to play more in Serbia as this country is completely isolated from the rest of Europe and people totally appreciate your efforts to play there!

From October 10th till October 24th, 2007, we plan to tour Brazil and the first week of the tour should be with RATTUS. Our second LP/CD called Utok ("Attack") will be recorded very soon and released in early summer 2007 in collaboration of Insane Society and Phobia Records. There will be a limited edition of 100 copies with a screen-printed cloth cover and a free DVD with footage of our Japanese tour. Also, since autumn 2006 we operate as an all-father band (the four band members have five children total). In 2008 we want to go to Japan again, and also to Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia, but that's just the very distant future right now.

There was also a good number of great shows in Brno: the **Loser Crew** collective has invited many bands from all around the world. I enjoyed the LA FRACTION and KYLESA shows the most.

Our **United Crusties** collective (basically SYIH members) had a total blast with a BURY THE LIVING show back in June 2006. It was attended by only 35 people (I still can't understand it!), but all of them went super wild! Also, DISTRESS from Russia and couple of Czech bands played making this a true international HC event. The SICK TERROR/BICKLES CAB show in September was pretty good and of course the annual **Killed By Brno Fest** (this time already in its fourth year) in December was an event to remember forever! Nine domestic bands played and I was especially impressed by the tight grindcore assault of INGROWING (total old-timers playing since the early '90s with several CDs and a South Asian tour behind them!) and the punk-as-fuck demolition show of DEMARCHE. Also SHEEVA YOGA did a special set with Jason Flower (Canadian expatriate in Poland, ex-MEXICAN POWER AUTHORITY, THIRD WORLD PLANET and countless other bands) doing vocals as a project band called COCONUT BULLDOZER (by the way they look for label to release their debut stuff). SEE YOU IN HELL had a guest second guitar player—Paaya from FESTA DESPERATO, who will also play with us in Brazil—and attacked the stage under the sounds of bombs explosions and air-raids dressed in total punk uniforms with spikes, studded jackets, motorcycle boots, etc. We played five DISCHARGE covers in a row and covered song by the classic '80s Czechoslovakian punk band HNF. This year we also tried to have more than just bands destroying the stage, so there was vegan food provided by Food Not Bombs collective, a photo exhibition about the history of the squatting movement in Netherlands, an animal rights stall and a free box with second-hand records, CDs, etc. It was truly a great night with almost 250 people in the audience!

All the above mentioned shows took the place at the **Yacht Club**, which continued to host shows for the whole year under totally fair conditions with very open-minded stuff. Let's hope this will go on!

Some of the gigs also took the place in our super small and sweaty practice room, for example the Jack Control benefit gig (and FESTA DESPERATO's records release party) in March 2006. The VISIONS OF WAR/INSTICNT OF SURVIVAL afternoon gig in June and FPO/THIS HOME IS PREPARED gig in August, which was probably my favorite one of the bunch (two crazy Macedonian bands, which I can only recommend to your delightful listening experience!). Recently our practice room hosted GUIDA from Italy and a hardcore/punk poster exhibition with posters from the early '90s Czech scene, and from Japan, USA, etc.

For 2007 we plan shows for SUMMON THE CROWS, HEVN (both bands from Norway), AFTERBIRTH (Scotland), and we totally bow down and pray everyday on our knees to mighty gods of crust for the possible FRAMTID show in Brno during their June 2007 Euro tour! (The

last Japanese crust band to play here was BATTLE OF DISARM in 1997.) Witnessing the wall of noise this band creates live on their home turf of Osaka during our tour, I am a little afraid that the unstable walls of our Yacht Club cannot survive such an event... I will keep you informed!

Some Brno shows are organized in tiny **Mydlo Pub** (located near city-centre) mostly by FESTA DESPERATO guys and by people from NAGAIKA. Last year PAVILIONUL 32 (Romania) and ANOTHER WAY (Hungary) played there, also SVARTENBRANDT (Sweden), NEUROOTIISET PELIMANIT and RAKKAUS (both Finland). FESTA guys work on shows for JACK (Hungary), TOTALICKERS (Spain) or DISTRESS (Russia) for 2007.

A few killer shows also took the place in small villages south of Brno (in fact, many people from bands listed above as being from Brno are from these places!): the drummer of FESTA DESPERATO and some guys from REAKCE NA ZMENU and RISPOSTA set up gigs every six months in their village called Prisnotice in a dusty cellar of the old village hall. These are small fests with dozens of crazy drunk crusty teenagers going wild and mostly crust/fast HC bands in the lineup. In October BOMBENALARM from Germany played there and it was a complete riot! Kamil from REAKCE NA ZMENU organized his first show in the nearby village of **Vranovice** just two weeks ago with an all-Brno bands lineup (SCARTO, PRIPYAT, REAKCE, SEE YOU IN HELL, RISPOSTA and E330 from Slovakia) and again it was really insane gig with around 100 people, mass fights with artificial paper weapons and lots of stage diving. I like shows like these a lot!

I know that in my last report I announced plans for a possible compilation LP including bands from Brno... well, this was postponed due various reasons and obstacles, but the idea to document the local scene is still alive and this year we will probably start working on it. We'll see.

More shows!

There were great gigs all around Czech during 2006; I will mention just some of them. Just before summer, NIGHTMARE from Japan played a super energetic show of their patented Burning Spirits hardcore in the 007 Club in front of almost 200 people. I think it was one of the best gigs of their European tour. CAUSTIC CHRIST destroyed the Vrah Club this past November despite a really low turnout of 30 people or something. I have already talked about the BURY THE LIVING gig in Brno—the next day they played in Jihlava (bigger city between Prague and Brno) and it was a really enthusiastic show for a Monday night: 80 people going wild! There were more shows, but either I don't remember them so well or I didn't attend them.

The thing the Czech scene is really known for (at least around Europe) is the numerous summer fests. During the summer of 2006 there were summer festivals almost every weekend and they attract more and more people from the abroad all the time. It's probably the cool combination of good international lineups (you name any foreign band and they've probably played here), cheap Czech beer and food (and good prices in general), friendly and enthusiastic audience and good location in the middle of Europe. I personally don't have such a positive attitude towards some of these summer gatherings (the biggest ones), but I won't go into detail about it. I just want to say that some of the bigger events are already too big and sometimes they seem to be really consumer oriented, with some disappointing rock star practices. It seems totally sickening to me that back in the '90s "sub-genres" of hardcore/punk like crust or fast HC were seen (at least by me and my friends) as something like more political and DIY alternative to shitty commercial trends like NYHC or pop-punk, but today, at least in Czech, they are almost the same. Some "popular" foreign bands are totally over-hyped here by the organizers ready to pay them absurd amounts of money and offering all kinds of luxurious conditions (hotel, catering, flight tickets, etc.), while Czech bands can only dream about treatment like this. And the funniest thing is that often, when these crust stars enter the stage, it's total drunk faux pas... shitty messy gigs leaving people with open mouths or running away from the show space. This used to especially be the case for some Scandinavian bands. No name-dropping here since I don't want to spoil your fun. I just wish people would return back to hardcore/punk roots and stop putting bands on pedestals. Anyway, lets' go:

I stopped attending the **Obscene Extreme Fest** already a few years ago, so I can only rely on information from my friends... Last year PISSCHRIST from Australia blew everyone's filthy ears off, also bands like DISMEMBER, DRILLER KILLER, SKITSYSTEM, MASSGRAV, and dozens of grind/death metal/gore acts played. Check out www.obscene.cz for more info about 2007's fest (so far there are mostly death/grind bands in the lineup for 2007, so I am not into listing them here). I just want to mention that only vegan/vegetarian food is allowed to be sold during this fest, which is pretty unusual and unconformable for many attendees (most of them being metalheads)... I find this totally great!

Fluff Fest is a mostly youth crew/metal HC/straight edge fest, again not so interesting to me, but last year SEEIN RED played (finally, for the first time in Czech!). I would have also loved to see HJERTESTOP from Denmark, but I am not into attending a three-day fest to see two interesting bands. This year CONVERGE should play. At the time of writing this report for a

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really spicy discussion was started on the biggest Czech hardcore website www.czechcore.cz about some shady practices of Fluff Fest organizers. It seems that they don't pay the bands or festival staff so well, but at the same time they ended up with something like $30,000 (US) in their own pockets after last year's fest... so much for the "friendly DIY punk" festival! This accusation came from people who used to work with them before, so it seems to be a pretty trustworthy source, and nobody was able to deny it so far. Make up your own mind... www.fluffmusic.com.

I refuse to write anything about **Antifest!** This is probably the biggest street punk/oi gathering in the middle of Europe and it's miles away from the things I consider as punk. Last year the ambulance had to be called 50 times... enough said. If you are in suicidal mood...

Killed By Noise Feast is organized by Bohdan from Nightmare Records (previously Impregnate Noise Laboratories label, Bohdan is also the drummer for MASSGENOCIDE PROCESS), this fest is a much "smaller" one than the three mentioned previously (they are all outdoors, while KBN takes place inside). Last year two '80s Italian bands headlined it: IMPACT (who sucked) and EU'S ARSE (who positively surprised me, they sounded really authentic and as much as I dislike old reformed bands, EU'S ARSE was a truly nice exception). I liked the sets by MASSGENOCIDE PROCESS and IDIOTS PARADE (extreme HC from Slovakia with female vocals and no bass) a lot too. This year FILTH OF MANKIND from Poland will play and there will be for sure more interesting bands in the line-up. The place is still the same like in last two years – Mir Club in Uherske Hradiste. Check out http://killed-bynoise.wz.cz.

Play Fast Or Don't is organized by people from LYCANTHROPHY, NEEDFUL THINGS, and THEMA 11, and last year it took the place in an old middle-ages stone wall in Hradec Kralove—really cool space! I liked DISKONTO a lot despite not-so-ideal sound, also GUIDED CRADLE and GRIDE were good, some other bands not. There was also so called "sludge stage" with slow bands from Czech; I was really blown away by GOSPEL OF THE FUTURE's set, who played heavy hardcore not unlike EYE HATE GOD. You can find some ex-members of MINDLOCK and SPACE TO BEING in this band. This year the lineup should include SAYYADINA (Sweden), CLUSTER BOMB UNIT (Germany), DODSDOM (Sweden) and many more. Check out www.playfast.cz.

Gathering Of Free Souls is almost no fest at all as only three bands per night play in two days, still it's my fave event of the summer, organized by Vrah Club people in the open air in the hills. Last year KISMET HC from UK played a raging set there and I was also way impressed by locals COMPLICITE CANDIDE's set. Check out www.vrah.wz.cz.

All these fests took the place between July and September. I won't name the exact dates as you can find more about them by clicking on their websites.

Just before every summer (in May) since the late '90s the **Obscene Society Fest** has been organized by the Insane Society and Obscene Production labels. Usually bands from these labels and some "bigger" foreign guest play every year (in 2005 it was EXTREME NOISE TERROR, in 2006 YACOPSAE). This year it will be for the first time a two-day event (May 11th and 12th) taking the place in Pardubice-city, Zluty Pes Club. I am sure that bands like GRIDE, GUIDED CRADLE or SEE YOU IN HELL will play there this year, as well as AFTERBIRTH and DISFEAR as "headliner" too. Check out the websites of Insane Society and Obscene Productions.

Ondra, the drummer from LYCANTHROPHY used to organize fests every six months in a village pub near his hometown of Zdar nad Sazavou (in the middle between Prague and Brno). Mostly Czech crust/fast HC bands play there and the fest is called **Short, Fast and Loud**. I think he already did more than ten editions and sometimes foreign bands also play there (KONTATTO, KISMET HC, HUMAN WASTE...).

I personally enjoy small gigs in faraway corners of the country and my band is systematically searching for options like these to play. People usually don't have these shitty "So now you should entertain me!" attitudes, are more respectful and friendly and these gigs can really inspire somebody to start a band or some other punk activity. Small cities' scenes rule. Period.

Some reading matter

If you are like me, you still prefer a good old-fashioned paper fanzine over a sterile, impersonal TV screen... even in 2007. I know that in my last report I complained about the lack of zines, but during the last few months tons of zines have come out here. This is so great, I almost can't believe it... really! Now I am not 100% sure if writing about Czech zines will be of any use to you since all of them are in our language, so you can either learn Czech or at least have some fun checking out the photos and graphics. Also, my experience tells me that the only people who use these resources are shitty PR departments of labels like Fat Wreck or Revelation and this is something I totally don't want to support... go fuck yourself! I would rather hope that people like you, who care about faraway country scenes might look for some people with like-minded views or musical taste and will use this for communication and overseas connections. Anyway, let's try...

Killed By Noise is a bi-monthly free newsletter going strong since the late '90s. It's professionally printed with a print run of 1,500 copies and every issue has a few pages of full-page format crammed with reviews, gig dates and scene-related info. Bohdan from MASSGENOCIDE PROCESS/Nightmare Records puts this out.

Cheers comes from Prague and there are three issues out so far, mostly into crust and raw punk. Total cut and paste, punk as fuck graphics, band interviews, gig reviews, zine reviews, tour stories, etc. Half-page format and Xeroxed—punk to the bone!

Noise Master is a zine done by guys from RABIES, who have put it out since the mid '90s, and 17 issues are out so far. Mostly into extreme HC, grind, noise and crust, every issue comes with tons of interviews of bands from all over the world—very DIY and exotic stuff, mostly. Half-

page format, xeroxed, pretty thick.

Move Your Ass was another free newsletter, this time with the aim to unite and promote different subgenres from oi! through grind and crust till ska or emo. A noble idea for some (not for me though), but recently the editors decided to make some drastic changes and it seems that next issues won't be free anymore and that the content will be more expressing the editors' own taste without forcing themselves to fulfill some scene duties. I really hated the full-page adds for skinhead clothing and some totally empty interviews with rock stars or wanna-be rock stars, so I really hope this shit will be gone with the new format of MYA.

Underground Harmony is a newer zine from Northern Czech with a similar idea to unite everyone, this time not only punks and skins, but also hip-hop, techno, breakdance, etc., with some left-wing political ideas. Sorry, I am probably too old or too narrow-minded for this! Two issues out so far, offset print, full-page format.

Drunk Nach Osten is a brand new zine from Brno done by Paaya from FESTA DESPERATO/PRIPYAT and I will help him with some articles too. A pilot issue was put out consisting of just one (but super-long) travel report describing the editor's summer adventures in ex-Yugoslavia, Greece, and Ukraine. Very interesting and eye-opening stuff! Future issues will be 100% dedicated to ex-Eastern European hardcore, and there're some vague plans for an English version of this zine as well. Next issue should have DISTRESS and FPO interviews! If your band comes from the ex-Eastern European region, then make sure to write; there's finally a zine not giving a fuck about the newest US/Swedish trendy shit!

Smrt (translates as "Death") is a zine by FESTA's bass player, Miruus, with two issues out mostly dedicated to crust and raw punk, particularly the Finnish one! Small, half-page, DIY as fuck, xeroxed zine—very cool!

Hluboka Orba is my zine and in December 2006 I did the 26th issue. It's basically a thick book with 200 pages of full-page format and a print run of 800 copies (and also a colorful cover!). Tons of tour/travel reports (GUIDED CRADLE around Europe, SEE YOU IN HELL in Japan... also Indonesia, Super Sabado Gigante II, Australia, etc.), band interviews (SKL, BOMBENALARM, SELFISH, FORCA MACABRA...), political articles, reviews, etc. If you can't read Czech, then you can still find dozens and dozens good quality photos of your hardcore (mostly Japanese) idols here!

Trhavina is a brand new zine done by Iny from GRIDE. Extremely nice layout, professional print and really in-depth writing. A huge article on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, interviews with ZEMEZLUC, SCRAWL, VOETSEK, and a long section dedicated to interviews with punx over 30. Part of it consists of interviews with mostly Czech and Slovakian punx, but part of it is translated from some ancient *MRR* issue from 1993, I think, which had the same idea (so you can read Czech translations of interviews with Jello Biafra, STALIN's singer, etc.). Kind of personal, political, and musical, with good taste at the same time and one of my fave. I totally recommend it!

Choroba Mysli comes from the Southern Czech area of Pisek. Four issues out so far combining the editor's love for domestic extreme music (the latest issue has interviews with LAHAR, GREX, etc.) and their strong anarchist politics. Professional layout, tons of pages, offset print and it looks really nice.

For The Punx is a zine by MAD PIGS' drummer and as the name suggests it's very street punk/raw punk oriented. The second issue is professionally printed with a full-page format and tons of pages. Lots of interviews with bands like GUIDED CRADLE, STATE CONTROL, DESTRUCT, SS-KALIERT, ZEMEZLUC, OBTRUSIVE, etc., usual reviews, gig reports and more.

Bloody Mary comes from Prague and it's a riot grrrl/feminist zine done by punks; really interesting and entertaining at the same time, with a healthy dose of humor. 11 issues out so far, half page format, xeroxed.

Buryzone is another long-timer released since the mid-'90s in Ostrava. Mostly grindcore, fast HC. death metal and crust stuff; DIY layout and xeroxed. 12 issues out.

There are way more zines (*Cerelitida, Chyba, XDrugX, Kill Your Dreams, Go And Kill, Bakteria, Uber Alles, Marast* to name a few), but those listed above were put out recently.

This is the end!

OK, I think that's enough already... I wrote this to get you more interested in a scene that is still (even after some solid ten years of writing reports like this one) often overlooked and ignored. I hope this was at least a little useful for you. Thanx for your attention!

Filip, February 2007

Contact me here: Filip Fuchs, Grohova 39, 602 00 Brno, Czech Republic, Europe; orba@seznam.cz

Contacts:

GRIDE: www.gride.wz.cz (also contact for *Trhavina* zine)

LYCANTHROPHY: www.lycanthrophy.wz.cz, www.myspace.com/lycanthrophy

RABIES: www.rabies.wz.cz (also contact for *Noise Master* zine)

HIBAKUSHA: www.hibakusha.webz.cz

DEPRESY MOUSE/Project Production: luis.stimpi@seznam.cz

NEEDFUL THINGS: www.needfulthings.wz.cz

STOLEN LIVES: www.stolenlivesband.com, www.myspace.com/stolenlives

PRUMYSLOVA SMRT: www.prumyslovasmrt.wz.cz (also contact for *Uber Alles* zine)

FESTA DESPERATO: www.festadesperato.com, www.myspace.com/festadesperato (also for *Drunk Nach Osten*, *Smrt* and *Bakteria* zines)

GUIDED CRADLE: www.guidedcradle.com

FLOWERS FOR WHORES/Damage Done Records: www.damagedonerecords.com

SHEEVA YOGA, DISNEY, COCONUT BULDOZER, Olga Hepnarova Recs: http://sheevayoga.czechcore.cz, www.myspace.com/sheevayoga

http://www.myspace.com/coconutbulldozer

DEGENERACE: www.degenerace.wz.cz

DEMARCHE: www.demarche.wz.cz

THEMA 11: http://themaeleven.czechcore.cz

LAHAR: www.myspace.com/laharfastcore

KAHKASHAN: www.kahkashan.wz.cz

LAKME: http://lakme.czechcore.cz

SAY WHY?: www.saywhy.wz.cz

ZEMEZLUC: www.zemezluc.com

PRIPYAT: www.pripyat86.com

MAD PIGS: www.madpigs.wz.cz, www.myspace.com/madpigs (also contact for For The Punx zine)

SEE YOU IN HELL: www.seeyouinhell.cz, www.myspace.com/seeyouinhellthrash

MORE BAD NEWS: http://morebadnews.czechcore.cz

MASSGENOCIDE PROCESS: www.masscrust.wz.cz

Killed By Noise zine/Nightmare Records: www.nightmare.cz

Move Your Ass zine: www.mya.bloguje.cz

Cheers zine: dis.standa@volny.cz

Choroba Mysli zine: prustrel@centrum.cz

Insane Society Records: www.insanesociety.net

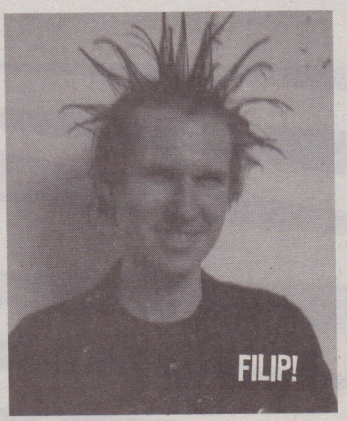
Phobia Records: www.insanesociety.net/phobia

Day After Records: www.dayafter.cz

Samuel Recs/Kill Your Dreams: www.myspace.com/samuelrecords

Gasmask Records: www.maskcontrol.com

General info about the hardcore/punk scene and the best source about gigs around Czech and Slovakia: www.czechcore.cz



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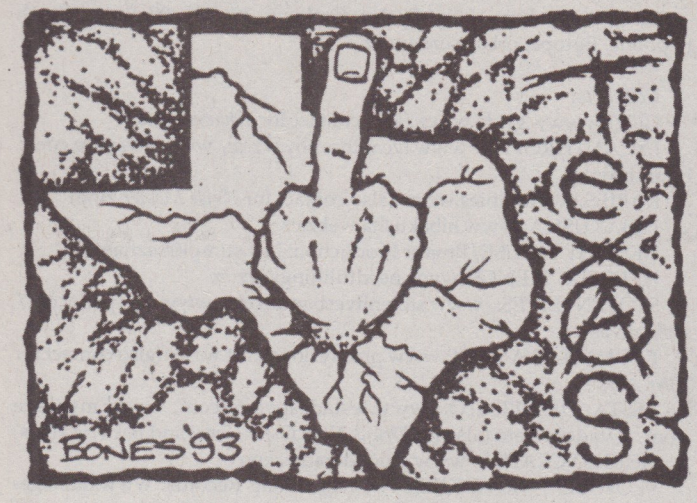

EAST TEXAS SCENE REPORT

I'm writing this scene report in hopes or attracting more touring bands to the area once again. Believe it or not, East Texas was a hotspot for punk/hardcore in the mid to late 90's. A lot of "bigger" acts came through the area, like Alkaline Trio, Hatebreed, 108, Snapcase, Total Chaos, and Bloodlet, and played alongside local acts like THE COFFIN BOYS, DISTORTED PIGLETS, THE WORMS, 1066, BULO, and HILT. These local bands went on to play shows in the southern US before most of the scene kids left the area to go to college in Austin.

Right now there are many bands in the East Texas area trying to keep the music alive, as well as a few venues/show spots trying to help out. **The Pitt** in Marshall, Texas, (near the Louisiana border) has monthly all-ages shows. The Pitt also houses ACW Pro Wrestling, so you get a mix or the music/wrestling crowds at all of the shows. A lot of great bands have played The Pitt as of late, including MANNYS WIG, TAKE IT TO HEART, THE SKANKS, SIX TIMES TO TRY AGAIN, and BLANKET OF M.

STUDFARM (myspace.com/studfarmtx) hails from the small town of Quitman, Texas, and plays blistering metal that peels the paint off of the walls. They also run all-ages house shows in Quitman and are always willing to give bands a place to play.

SIX TIMES TO TRY AGAIN (sixtimestotryagain.com) is another killer metal/hardcore outfit hailing from Rusk, Texas. Rusk houses our mental health facility and one would have to wonder if STTA has frequented the establishment with their crazy brand of metal and stage antics. STTA is also directly connected to a house-show venue called **The Old House**. These guys are super cool and with help you with bookings there.

BLANKET OF M (myspace.com/blanketofm) is a dark punk band from Tyler, Texas, that is pretty closely connected with STTA. The bands play shows together as often as possible. Joey Corman, the singer of BOM, is also a pro wrestler, so he also has a hand in booking The Pitt along with Jason, as well as **The Wallace Arena** another wrestling venue in Gladewater, TX.

FROM UNDERNEATH (www.myspace.com/fromunderneath-music) is another hardcore band from Tyler, but they tend to play DFW more often these days. You can catch them at a house show spot in Canton, Texas, called **Low Places**, and at **The Door**, a super cool all-ages venue, also in Canton. The people who run the venue are easy to deal with and have a great set up for the bands,

For 21-and up shows there is the **Side Pockett Lounge** in Kilgore, Texas. They tend to have mostly metal shows but punk bands like BLANKET OF M have been known to sneak on the bill every now and then.

A DISCO FOR FERNS (myspace.com/adiscoforferns) is one of the crazier bands in the area. The noise/grind outfit is more likely to assault each other than play a set but it makes for interesting shows.

OBZ Records is a local CD-R label that releases a lot of the local stuff. They are also in the process of releasing some of the old Tyler punk/HC releases.

Venues:

The Pitt in Marshall: myspace.com/thepittacw, contact Jason Rand at deezresults@yahoo.com

The Old House in Rusk: myspace.com/theoldhousevenue

The Door in Canton: thedoordallas.com

Side Pockett Lounge in Kilgore: myspace.com/cornerpockettx

—John Larance (torpedoblackhart@yahoo.com)

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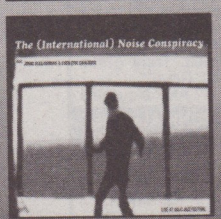

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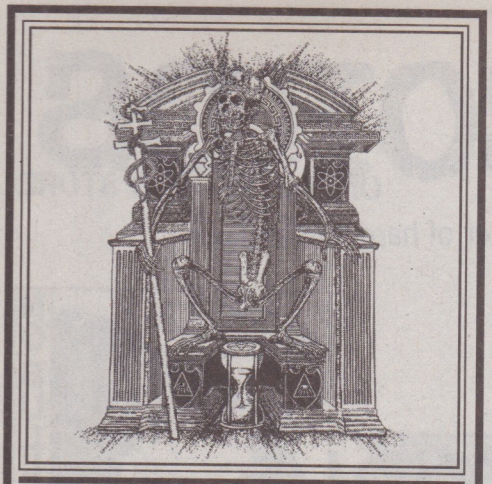

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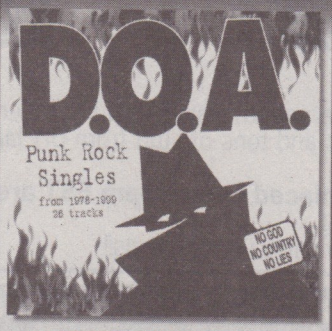

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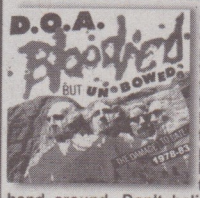

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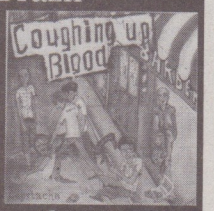

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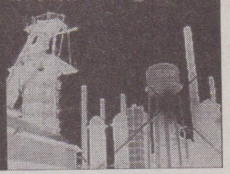

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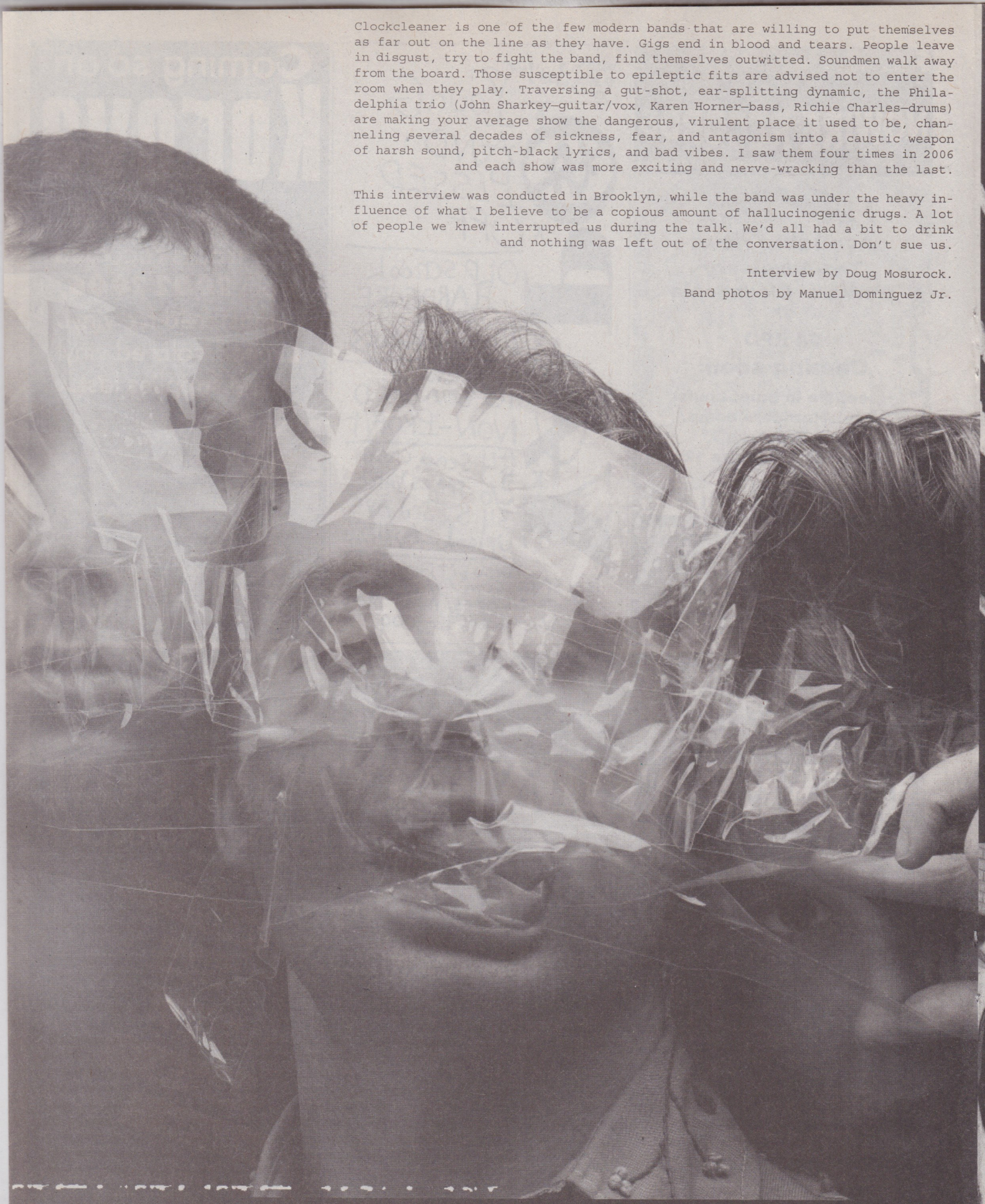

CLOCKCLEANER

Clockcleaner is one of the few modern bands that are willing to put themselves as far out on the line as they have. Gigs end in blood and tears. People leave in disgust, try to fight the band, find themselves outwitted. Soundmen walk away from the board. Those susceptible to epileptic fits are advised not to enter the room when they play. Traversing a gut-shot, ear-splitting dynamic, the Philadelphia trio (John Sharkey—guitar/vox, Karen Horner—bass, Richie Charles—drums) are making your average show the dangerous, virulent place it used to be, channeling several decades of sickness, fear, and antagonism into a caustic weapon of harsh sound, pitch-black lyrics, and bad vibes. I saw them four times in 2006 and each show was more exciting and nerve-wracking than the last.

This interview was conducted in Brooklyn, while the band was under the heavy influence of what I believe to be a copious amount of hallucinogenic drugs. A lot of people we knew interrupted us during the talk. We'd all had a bit to drink and nothing was left out of the conversation. Don't sue us.

Interview by Doug Mosurock.

Band photos by Manuel Dominguez Jr.

MRR: What brought all this on? What brought you along this path?

Sharkey: What, you mean rock and roll?

MRR: Rock and roll is a given. I'm talking about this band. This is about Clockcleaner. A lot of people reading this might not know who you are.

Sharkey: Alright, this is how it happened. I moved back to Philly from Cleveland…

MRR: Why did you move to Cleveland?

Sharkey: Because I hated Philadelphia.

MRR: Why did you hate Philadelphia?

Sharkey: Because it was full of petulant retards.

MRR: What year was this?

Sharkey: 2001. Just a bunch of kids going to, like, dance parties and shit. Pretty weak city, so I moved to Cleveland, climbed to the top of the mountain, saw what I could see. So I moved back, saw Richie Charles on the street, said "Let's start a new wave band," and that was pretty much it.

MRR: How'd you know Richie?

Sharkey: I'm really popular. One time I pissed in Richie's dead tomato plant.

Richie: It bummed me out.

MRR: Did it come back to life?

Sharkey: No, it didn't.

Richie: Urine will not bring dead plants back.

Sharkey: I've peed on girls and it didn't bring them back to life, either. Why should it to a tomato plant?

MRR: Alright, so you ran into Richie, agreed to start a new band, and that's it?

Sharkey: Actually, it was Richie's idea. I thought it was good, so we decided to play music. We got a bass player at first, who I will not mention by name, who's the kind of poseur who plays without a pick, doesn't turn his treble knob up—basically is a total bozo. Anyway, we started the band, wrote almost the entire first record with this guy. And then he quit, because we were gonna start practicing in a place where Richie lived, and he couldn't handle the fact that—

Richie: That a black guy lived there.

Sharkey: That a black guy lived there. So we told him he was out of the band. Then we got another guy who has a corn nut for a penis, and then recorded the first record. So that was basically how it went. That was year one. We put out the first record, The Hassler. That was with Warren Slagel on bass.

MRR: Warren Slagel.

Sharkey: Warren Slagel. So it's basically all history from there.

MRR: Did you play in any other bands in Philly before you left?

Sharkey: Not really. I was in a band called Assstabber. Richie was in At Bay.

Richie: I was in Pearl Harbor Payback.

MRR: So when you left Philly, John, you must have been, what, 20?

Sharkey: 19.

MRR: And Cleveland must have been…Why did you go there? It's not a city most people think about when they're moving someplace.

Sharkey: I like to explore the cosmos. Basically, I had friends there in 9 Shocks Terror: Steven and Kevin and Tony and Wedge.

MRR: And you'd seen them in Philly?

Sharkey: Yeah, I met them through American rock and roll. They thought that it would be a good idea, that I would share a kinship with those Clevelanders. So I moved to Cleveland. Things were pretty erratic for a few months. It took me a while to settle in and find a job.

MRR: Pretty erratic? What happened?

Sharkey: I moved there in a house with Steve and Kevin. I didn't have a steady job for six months. I'd get drunk a lot, because beer was a lot cheaper. Basically I'd just spend my time making trouble, terrorizing people, fireworks, fist-fighting. This one time, the first week I lived in the house, this kid—I guess I'll say his name, it was Jake Kelly—he lived at Speak in Tongues, which was this stable for… (we get sidetracked here, talking about the now-defunct Cleveland venue, and food). So this kid Jake was kind of an artist, he thinks he's hot shit. He came to my house, after a long night of drinking. And I kind of wanted to just chill out at my house, but the party showed up there. And Jake was kind of in my face, saying all kinds of ridiculously dorky things.

Richie: An artist!

Sharkey: Yes, an artist, he's a cartoonist. But without a penis. So after about twenty minutes of him standing there trying to berate me, I kicked him in his face, and threw him forcefully off my porch. Then he walked sixty blocks back to his house.

MRR: So you basically hit his reset button.

Sharkey: Yeah, and for weeks later, kids who were his friends kept coming up to me and saying shit like, "That was great! You really shattered his ego! He's been moping around, and he's really a shell of a man now." I know that story was quite self-inflating and shitty but that set the tone for how things were for me in Cleveland from that point on. This man is an asshole. So it was about two years of things like that. I got bored of that. I was supposed to join 9 Shocks while I was there. I sorta did. I moved back to Philly, started Clockcleaner, and now I play the sporadic tour or gig with 9 Shocks, went to Japan with them, boring shit like that.

MRR: So how did you meet Karen?

Sharkey: When Warren Slagel was in the band, we played with her old band, Readyset, and we were taken by her bass styles. I always had her in the back of my mind, knowing that Slagel wouldn't stand the test of time. So right before we recorded our first full-length, Nevermind, we kicked him out, because he would just show up stoned, and basically he was an all-around pantywaist.

Richie: Not Clockcleaner material.

Karen: No!

Sharkey: Not one bit.

MRR: So what does it take?

Karen: What is Clockcleaner material? Not to be whiny!

Sharkey: No whining. Karen's penis is infinitely larger than Slagel's.

Karen: I'll testify to that.

Sharkey: You gotta be willing to go out there and put your nuts on the line.

MRR: But why? You're talking to young punk America, they don't know what it takes. Maybe it means going to the mall and spilling a drink on the floor.

Karen: It means not whining, not talking shit, and—

MRR: That's funny, because we've just been sitting here, talking shit!

Sharkey: It's basically like, quit your job, quit your fat girlfriend, and be in a band for real. But nobody does that in Philadelphia. Man Man can blow Tom Waits all they want, but they still won't make him cum.

MRR: Everybody, Sharkey is eating rice with his hands off a bare tabletop right now. So this man is truly hard.

Karen: White rice! What do you want?

Sharkey: It's just basically, like, regular stuff. Kind of having the nuts, or the guts, to go out there and just give it all up for a while. Like not having a steady job, or having a steady routine. I mean, we all have full-time jobs, but we can fuck it all off for a while, and make it work for us.

MRR: So what you're basically telling me is that Clockcleaner is a reaction to Philadelphia.

Richie: It's heart. Clockcleaner is heart.

Sharkey: Clockcleaner is definitely a reaction to Philadelphia, and to a lot of other things. I don't enjoy dance music. I don't enjoy DJs who are balding, heartfelt singers.

MRR: How do you feel about union guys?

Karen: We like the unions!

Richie: Turn the tape off. Fuck scabs.

Sharkey: One time I fist-fought a scab and beat him so bad that he couldn't look out his right eye for about three months.

MRR: So is it a reaction musically as well?

Richie: No, fuck that. Nobody's ever heard any music from Philadelphia.

Karen: Philly doesn't matter.

Sharkey: It's not really a reaction to Philadelphia music, it's a reaction to music in general.

Richie: It's more than just our stupid city.

Sharkey: The city has always been kind of…just a place to live.

Karen: No offense to our city.

Sharkey: The people don't give us any validity in town, just because…I dunno.

Richie: I think they're intimidated.

Sharkey: It's very much an intimidation factor, and it's also the fact that we've never kissed anyone's ass to get a show, never really played by the rules.

MRR: Let's talk about the bannings.

Sharkey: We couldn't play in Philly for a while.

Karen: There were a lot of places that wouldn't let us play.

MRR: So you could play, you just wouldn't want to?

Richie: Mayor Street's not gonna come after us if we play somewhere, but a lot of places wouldn't have it.

Sharkey: Milton Street, his brother, might have something to say about it.

Richie: Michael Nutter might show up.

[some girl walks past]

Sharkey: Hey, baby! You got a boyfriend?

Richie: You got a sister?

Karen: You got a brother?

Sharkey: Sup, Mama!

Richie: No, seriously, since Johnny Dock signed up with us, we've been playing, like, electricians' unions, Mummers' parties. We play the Mummers Parade every year.

Sharkey: We play the St. Paddy's Day parade.

Richie: We're a working punk band, so we can find cash and gear on the street.

Sharkey: The bannings were based on unruly behavior that was not extremely out of the ordinary. Much exaggeration.

Karen: We were looking for drama, created some new drama.

Sharkey: People were looking for a band to get behind and hate. And we filled those shoes quite easily, and I'm fine with that.

Richie: That city loves to cry.

Sharkey: Everybody in Philadelphia loves to moan and eat brunch.

Karen: What's amazing is that they have nothing to cry about, but they want to cry anyway.

Richie: The fuckin' Phillies, the fuckin' Eagles, the fuckin' Clockcleaners! We're the bums.

Sharkey: Everybody in Philadelphia eats brunch and blows each other. Everybody in Philadelphia loves Modest Mouse and hairdos, and saggy boots. Nobody likes to get fucked up.

MRR: Well, you're basically describing Brooklyn, too.

Richie: Well, we don't live here!

MRR: You were saying the last time you were here that this is the softest town you've ever been to.

Richie: I did say that.

Sharkey: And I concurred, and added that I felt confident that if I needed to fight, then I could fight this entire town and win.

MRR: Maybe Williamsburg or Park Slope. There're a lot of parts of this borough that you'll never go to.

Richie: Dice Clay will never come to see us play.

Karen: We'd love him to come see us play.

MRR: Yeah, but you'd really need to work the drivetime radio angle.

Sharkey: I love drivetime radio. Kidd Chris is the only person that I will up in this interview.

[Hipster walks over, mumbles something about doing a line]

Sharkey: Fuck doing a line, we're trying to do an interview, you fucking retard!

Richie: Look at your hair!

MRR: Everyone, a guy wearing a leotard just walked over here.

Richie: You look like a shitty Beatle.

Sharkey: Nah, he looks like a jolly green giant.

Hipster: My mom's not proud.

Sharkey: Doreen is proud.

Hipster: My whole family thing didn't work out. Oh, you're doing an interview?

Sharkey: Yeah. It's going pretty good so far.

Richie: We're hired.

Hipster: Come downstairs and find me when you're done being a penguin fucking jagoff.

Sharkey: Hey, I'm kicking ass tonight! Karen's over in the bathroom line talking to some guy about anal sex.

Karen: What's that?

Sharkey: Karen, she's the godsend.

MRR: Is she the steadying influence you need in Clockcleaner?

Sharkey: Karen has been the perfect addition to this band since it's started. [to hipster]: Get out of here, you fuckin' skinny prick.

MRR: Let's talk about Karen's perpetual black eye. I noticed that it's healed.

Sharkey: Well, she used to have this boyfriend, and they were kind of into role playing, Renaissance fairs, punching each other during sex...

Richie: Life-sized chess boards.

MRR: I guess he's out of her life now?

Sharkey: Yeah. Karen's the kind of deviant we've always wanted, minus a bruise or lesion or two. She's kind of like the rug in The Big Lebowski. She really tied the room together.

MRR: What's up with that six-string bass?

Sharkey: She inherited that. It's not by choice, it's by necessity. None of us can afford gear.

MRR: Let's bore everybody and talk about gear. You're a supporter of the Crate PowerBlock, right?

Sharkey: Yeah, the PowerBlock. $99, 150 watts, Everett can suck me. Richie plays a drum kit.

Richie: I play some drums.

Sharkey: Karen plays out of free gear, all of it Crate.

MRR: So you're kind of like freegans?

Sharkey: We're kind of like freegans, except we don't have calendars made out of used tampons. None of us have a Slingshot reminder book, none of us have goofy hats or, like, blow each other on the weekends for fun, or like, on videotape. We just do regular stuff. We basically live under a bridge, we have a boombox and we play the first Bauhaus record and the first Modern English record under the bridge, and smoke cloves.

Richie: And all the animals that cross my path have become my pets.

Sharkey: I call Richie "Spacebeard" sometimes. We hang up dead cats off the ceiling of the bridge, we let them ferment, we eat them.

MRR: Let's go back to this Bauhaus/Modern English thing. I listened to your new demos, and you've moved into a direction that some might construe as death rock, that some might construe as gothic punk. Let's touch on that.

Richie: Yawn.

MRR: No, we need to talk about this, because up until now, your band has referenced a lot of things, like an AmRep/Touch & Go Midwestern sound, that has largely been discarded over the last ten years or so.

Sharkey: This is all I can describe it as. The way our first record came out was a demo. It was kind of the first thing we'd ever recorded together so it was kind of premature and sophomoric. The second one was much more focused, but still not exactly how I'd have liked things to come out.

MRR: It's a great record!

Sharkey: Oh, yeah, I guess it's a great record, it's the first record I've been proud of.

Karen: You can blame it on me!

Sharkey: You're not on it.

Karen: No, I mean the new sound.

Sharkey: No, I can't blame it on you. You didn't write any of the songs. I write all those stupid goth songs.

MRR: It's more of a focus from the first one. I'm not talking about *The Hassler*, I don't believe that it exists.

Sharkey: Neither do we. We believe a song or two does but not that album.

MRR: But *Nevermind* really just lurches on, it gets slower as it goes on.

Sharkey: Well, Nevermind was written as an album. It wasn't written as songs; I wrote it as an entity. I wrote the songs, Richard and I conceived it. The bass player that would have been on that record really didn't focus hard enough on it, so it was left up to us, and we decided to make it a chunk instead of a bunch of songs. The new one is like...having been back in Philadelphia for two and a half years, there's certain things about that city that just make it not a pleasant place to live.

MRR: Explain.

Sharkey: It's just a shitty city. The murder rate is higher than most places this year.

MRR: Have you guys experienced any crime?

Sharkey: Well, I live in the shittiest part of the city. I live in North Philly. I come home and there's a bum pissing on my fuckin' stoop. I have to lock my car in a gate, behind a barbed wire fence, or it'll get keyed, like it did a month before I could do that. And none of us can move. None of us are deep enough in the pockets that we can just up and move to Brooklyn or something.

MRR: Well, what about elsewhere in

Philly?

Sharkey: That's not even an option for anybody. Housing prices are rising due to false demand. It's not as cheap as it was a few years ago, even. And people will attribute that to more and more affluent people moving into the city, and that is true, but nothing's really changed. The quality of life in the city has not improved, but the costs have.

MRR: I think it's fair to say that that's happened across the board, though.

Sharkey: It has, for the most part, everywhere you go.

Richie: It's clear that housing costs are the reason why Nevermind sounds the way it does.

Sharkey: That's true.

Richie: To answer your question.

Sharkey: Housing costs also dictate a lifestyle.

Richie: What are you getting at here? What kind of interview is this?

MRR: I think it's important, because how you live is dictating how you sound. It's clear you're not really trying to be a certain kind of band.

Sharkey: You gotta realize that all of us live check-to-check. None of us live like we're deep in the pockets.

MRR: Yeah, like all of us.

Sharkey: There's nothing different about us from your local schlub who's a carpenter or something.

MRR: So you're craftsmen.

Sharkey: I screen t-shirts, Richie brews beer, Karen pushes-the-pencil her ass off. We all have day jobs, but we still can work 45 hours a week, practice three nights a week, and are able to tour when we feel like it.

MRR: Are you seeing the same things in other places when you're out on the road?

Sharkey: Not exactly.

Karen: Other places seem to be way more interesting. We meet people living the same way, but it seems way better.

Richie: Every city you go to, that's like the drinkingest city in America. Trenton? Forget it.

Sharkey: Oklahoma City? You'll never get more fucked up in Oklahoma City than you will in Lawrence, Kansas! Or Branson, Missouri!

Richie: We love drinkin' in fuckin' Madison, that's for sure.

Sharkey: We love to tour as much as we can.

[interrupted by Hipster #2]

Hipster #2: I was just Berdancin'.

MRR: We should talk about Berdan. He's a big influence on Clockcleaner.

Karen: No, he's not.

MRR: Well, maybe on Sharkey.

Sharkey: Berdan's penis is gray and stiff, that's all I have to say.

MRR: It's like E.T.

Sharkey: Berdan's dick has rigor mortis. It doesn't get hard. It's just dead.

MRR: OK, we've hit a cul-de-sac.

Sharkey: Berdan has a cul-de-sac, it's called his fuckin' vagina.

MRR: OK, back to touring.

Sharkey: We did a bunch of touring on our own means.

Karen: Playing all places other than Philly are excellent.

Sharkey: Yeah, Philadelphia sucks to play in. It's a fuckin' fickle town. You know what towns we like to play in? St. Louis. Great people there. Corbeta Corbata, great band to play with. Cleveland. The Homostupids: the best band in America. Number one band in America.

Richie: Those guys kick ass.

Sharkey: They rule. Best band in America. There is truly a shortage of bands that don't look like idiots on paper.

MRR: What about bands like Fucked Up or the Regulations?

Sharkey: Fucked Up is a band for internet virgins. They are about as cool as listening to The Brian Setzer Orchestra. Regulations are just tame poseurs. Back to cities we like. Cleveland is splendid. Lawrence, Kansas is bafo!

Richie: Lawrence is great. We didn't actually play a gig there.

Sharkey: We ditched our gig because some girls got mad at us because they made us dumpstered potato stew.

MRR: Food Not Bombs.

Sharkey: Did they even flyer?

Richie: Yeah, but all the flyers were on dumpsters in back alleys, which is also where they get their food.

MRR: So they were just targeting to their audience.

Karen: It was very uncool.

Richie: Yeah, but I climbed up on a goalpost there, and we went to William Burroughs' house. So that town rules.

Sharkey: (looking at GG Allin records) So many great songs on here.

Hipster #3: (walks over to table) I'm a huge fan of Clockcleaner, so the first thing I did was got an H&M jacket.

Karen: Yeeaaaoh! WOOOO!

Sharkey: Then I got a military hat, and my penis grew 30 inches…

MRR: It lifted up this table we're sitting around.

Sharkey: Still not as big as Zac Carr's enormous schlonger. He puts out forest fires with it.

Karen: Who is this Zac Carr?

Sharkey: Oh, he was that guy in that stupid outfit. Towns we like. Cleveland, Ohio. Lived there, loved it. Austin, Texas. It only sucks there because everyone in that town has nothing to do but talk about how awesome their town is.

MRR: You played with Trail of Dead down there, right?

Sharkey: They cancelled, because I think one of them found some aspirin for them all to snort. But we played it, and slayed the crowd, which is normal. Those cities are great. Baltimore, kinda cool town to play in but there's a bunch of fuckin' dorks there. And Brooklyn, Manhattan, always a good time there.

MRR: What bothers you? I wanna hear about your hates in general. There has to be something in your lives to make you play this kind of music.

Karen: What do you mean, "this kind of music"?

Sharkey: Well, it's malcontent; it's slow.

Richie: It's regular stuff.

Sharkey: It's everyday things that most people can handle, but we can't deal with.

Richie: Who is this guy? I hate this question!

MRR: Go write a song about it.

Karen: Give us some drugs!

Sharkey: I'm sick of being sad.

Karen: Awww.

Sharkey: It's true. I'm sick of being a sad man.

MRR: Well, what's there to be sad about? You live in a shitty place, but you got your woman.

Sharkey: That's true, I do have my woman. She has big jugs, which is nice.

Karen: Jugs are everything.

MRR: I heard you on WFMU the other day talking about how girls are only good for cleavage.

Karen: I said girls are good for many things!

Sharkey: No you didn't, you said girls were good for one thing!

Karen: Many things, cleavage being one of them! I said men are good for one thing.

Sharkey: What we hate is fuckin' poseurs, and tuna fish.

Karen: I like tuna fish.

Sharkey: Basically, what Exodus hates, we hate. Exodus '85 is our aesthetic. It's not really what we hate so much as it's… what we hate.

MRR: What you're no longer willing to tolerate.

Sharkey: Yeah.

Karen: We don't like bullshit.

Sharkey: Bullshit is thriving around us. It's like plastic fools, and plastic people, bullshit ideas and bullshit music. I don't give a fuck about politics. I like war. I don't give a fuck. I truly like wartime. I like to drink beer, I like to have a good time, and there are a lot of things hindering that. And those things upset me. I like Jewish people. I love Jews. If I could convert in good conscience…if my old lady was Jewish, the fuckin' second we moved in together, I'd be like "fuck it, l'chaim!" Mazel tov, stomp on a fuckin' wine glass, and I would tool my fuckin' Jew broad until she fuckin' came Lucky Charms. No, but like, it's not so much what we hate, it's just a lack of tolerance for stupidity.

Karen: And bullshit.

MRR: Ignorance?

Karen: I think you saying "ignorance" there is too highbrow.

Sharkey: It's like, 90% of the people we encounter day-to-day are just completely full of shit. I have no time for bullshit. Can't you just, like, wanna get laid, get drunk and enjoy your life? Why can't you enjoy things?

MRR: People can't own up to things. I was kind of embarrassed because I booked your first show in NYC at Lit, but I had quit working there by the time you played, so I wasn't there to run things.

Sharkey: Was that you?

Richie: Yeah, thanks.

Sharkey: I had to take a fuckin' Heineken bottle to the guy who was running it. That was the first time I was even almost physical with a promoter. He wasn't gonna pay us anything, and I grabbed a bottle and told him, "I'm gonna break this over your face if you don't give me $60 so we can get home." And we got $60.

Karen: And we paid for gas.

Sharkey: And Extreme Elvis got $60 too, which made us happy.

Richie: That guy kicked ass.

Sharkey: He was like, you guys know what you're doing, you held that guy by his shirt and threatened him until we got paid. I'm not gonna do a job and not get paid for it. Playing music is a job that we like, but we've still gotta be paid for it. Bob Ross got paid for every fuckin' one of those paintings he made. And I'm sure he loved it, painting happy little trees, clouds, waves.

Karen: Happy clouds!

Sharkey: Bob Ross is a big influence.

MRR: We got lost on a tangent talking about goth.

Karen: Goth is a little more melodic punk.

Sharkey: No, goth is a little more dramatic punk.

MRR: But you're not like a circus band.

Sharkey: I dunno, a lot of my family's died in the past two years. It sucks. Gets you down. Half my mother's side has died in the past two years. And I wasn't ready for it. When I was a child in school, kids' relatives would pass every now and then, and I didn't understand that. Then all of a sudden I turn 23 years old, and they all drop off like flies. I can get into some weird topics, but I don't wanna get into it.

MRR: Well, we're gonna have to talk about something, because you've answered all of my questions.

Sharkey: Well, I figured out…This is a good one. Astral traveling is a real thing, I know that. I'm being serious. The month after my grandfather died, I started dreaming about him. He would be sitting in my car outside of my parents' house, asking me about a doorway, and I would wake up paralyzed in fear. I finally talked to my mother about it, and she explained to me that she'd been having the same dreams, not as vivid as me, "but we haven't buried your grandfather yet." He died of cancer within three weeks. He went from being 240 pounds to 190 pounds in a week. He had liver cancer, dropped fifty pounds. I saw him a week before he died, and I almost couldn't look at him, because he was green, a shell of a man. And he died, and the last thing he did, my mother told me, was hallucinate. Because when you die of organ failure, there's a certain chemical secreted from your glands that makes you hallucinate. The last thing he said before he died was "Johnny's hiding underneath the bed." And I was on the phone with her when he said this, she was in Delaware, where he died. And he dies, I start having these dreams, and I'd wake up like three nights a week, totally paralyzed with fear, feeling like he was actually there. So that'll affect what kind of songs you're gonna write. He's buried now, he's been interred, but that fucked me up for a while. That and I do like the first Bauhaus record, the first Modern English record, and the first Dead Can Dance record. Killing Joke, but you know. I guess things like that can seep into your brain when you're trying to be creative. That's it for the interview. We want to start painting downstairs.

Clockcleaner have a 12" EP coming out in June on a label to be kept secret.

CLOCKCLEANER DESTINY FAN CLUB
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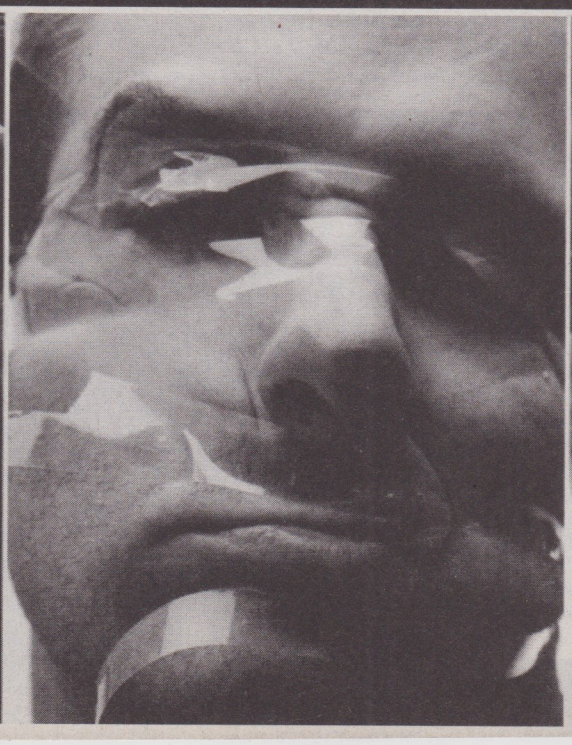


The Story of

CONFLICT

By Lance Hahn

Growing up in Hawaii, we had a somewhat more diverse hardcore and punk scene than most other major cities in the US. But it was still largely dominated by white army brats and kids from Kahala (a mostly haole and Japanese part of Oahu). Plus, every fanzine, every record, as great and as inspirational as it might be, was largely showing you a face you didn't recognize.

Enter Conflict. Not the anarcho band from England, but a surprisingly likeminded, if not more sophisticated hardcore band from Tucson, AZ, of all places. Playing righteous hardcore, the group was not only fronted by an Asian-American female vocalist but also boasted an Asian bassist. I remember first coming across the group in a write-up in my friend Jocko's fanzine, *Revenge Against Boredom*. Based on their demo tape, we both, as well as others in the Hawaii punk scene, got into Conflict and were, I dunno, sort of proud when *Revenge Against Boredom* wound up on the "thanks" list of their LP.

Karen Allman, AKA K Nurse, vocalist: "Looking back, I think hearing about Diane Chai and Mike McGrann so early on must have made it much easier for me to make the leap. But you also have to remember that there were relatively few Asian-Americans in Tucson back then. I was just 'strange' so perhaps there were fewer barriers…just primarily that I was a woman and so it was hard to be taken seriously."

Conflict, a great pre-crossover hardcore band from the Southwest, formed in 1982 out of the primordial ooze of the Tucson punk scene. In those early days, a punk scene outside of the major markets had to either be searched out or stumbled upon.

Karen: "I had a friend who was studying fashion design in LA and one time when we were visiting, she played some music for us. Boomtown Rats, Sex Pistols, probably the Clash. I said something like, "That's awful, let's hear it again!" Anyway, it was all over for me. I was down at the record store looking for this stuff, trading tapes, reading the zines. I read about many of the LA bands before I ever heard them on vinyl or in person."We started out as a really small scene, mostly congregating at this bar called Tumbleweeds (aka Tumbles, aka Backstage), a real divey place that sold quarter beers until 7 p.m. Bands also played warehouses, shoe shops, a front porch (anti-urban renewal/gentrification rally), the student union basement, a country bar. You name it. Initially bands with all sorts of musical styles would play together but, as happened in other places things gradually got homogenized. We were on the road between LA and everywhere else so many bands came through: Black Flag, Minutemen, X, Alleycats, Circle Jerks, DRI, Los Plugz, Crucifix, Battalion of Saints, DOA, Hüsker Dü. Many of those shows were tiny, and, when we started playing, we started opening for many of these bands."Some of the first shows were at Pearl's Hurricane in downtown Tucson. We'd go hear bands like the Suspects, which started out playing cover songs like 'God Save the Queen' and also the Serfers (later Green on Red)."

Bill Cuevas, guitarist: "I grew up in the '70s on the east side of Tucson, one step away from a trailer park. It was the land of Lynyrd Skynyrd and GTOs on blocks in people's front yards. If you looked different or admitted you liked even The Cars you'd get harassed. My exposure to 'punk rock' was crappy media exposure, ridiculous extreme tabloid stuff. *Saturday Night Live* had Devo and the B-52's on; that was the closest I came to actually experiencing 'punk' in an objective forum (*SNL* being a viable music resource in those days, hard to believe). Mostly, my limited exposure to 'punk' struck me as heavy on stupid attitude and fashion but light on music or thought. I was into music that was heavy and spoke to me. The bands that were popular, Kiss, Van Halen, Foreigner, Journey, Styx, just sucked in my opinion. I gravitated to Black Sabbath, Hendrix, even Bob Dylan, music that was heavy or that carried some intellect. So it made sense that eventually I stumbled upon and was seduced by hardcore, as opposed to what was being passed off as "punk" in those environs. After alienating myself from my friends, band mates, in searching for something better; I wandered 'downtown' one night and saw Black Flag at a dive called the Backstage. No nonsense, no fashion, sledgehammer music, thought and feeling, the right attitude. It changed my life."

Punk, especially at the time, wasn't really an idea that could be grasped naturally by most Asian-Americans. Often living the stereotype, the idea of getting onstage and playing *any* loud music was largely frowned upon. It took the courage of certain forerunners to help change the mostly white face of punk.

Karen: "I can think of California people like Mike McGrann of Channel 3 and Diane Chai from the Alleycats (and later on Sothira from Crucifix). When I saw them, I thought why not try to do this? It wasn't like I thought I couldn't do it, it had just never occurred to me. Before I listened to punk rock, I hadn't listened to that much rock music and I was an oboist. I thought Diane Chai was an amazing musician, by the way. They came

photo by Karen Walraven

through Tucson a couple of times and I was just in awe of them."I also knew Tim Tonooka, who published *The Ripper*, through his letters and the zine but we never met."

Possibly because being punk was hard enough in Tucson but probably largely because they'd never been previously challenged about their racial presumptions, the scene itself didn't greet Asian-American punks with open arms.

Karen: "Let's say that Arizona's not the most open-minded place. Even going out to the mall with my mixed race family was like putting on a show. When I was growing up, people asked me if my mom was a geisha, if my mom bound my feet, did I remember Pearl Harbor and so on. There was also considerable prejudice against female musicians, much less two in one band. And two Asians? In a punk band? I felt pretty invisible at times."

Like a lot of punks reinventing themselves, Karen picked the name K. Nurse for herself.

Karen: "Well, I was a nurse. I got into punk rock when I was a nursing student at the University and the punk nurse just sort of stuck. It's better than Jap girl or something, you know? I worked as a psychiatric nurse in the locked unit of the local county hospital for most of the time I was in Conflict and I wrote many songs about what I saw there. Even the name 'Conflict' came from a Psychiatry journal."

Even before the band started, Karen was involved in different aspects of the Tucson punk scene.

Karen: "I was very involved for many years, first as a freelancer writing scene reports (published in *New York Rocker* and *Slash*, and in our local rag, *Slit*) and then playing in various bands and, of course, attending shows! Nick booked many of the Tucson shows and so helped bring many bands to our area. Phoenix and Tucson are only a few hours away from each other (we had a 55 mph speed limit back then!) and so it wasn't unusual for people to travel up the interstate and back for shows. People were friendly with each other, for the most part, but there was also competition."

Karen started playing music with drummer Nick in the early '80s. Out of that, Conflict was formed in 1982.

Karen: "Nick and I first played together in a band called The Tampon Eaters and after that band imploded, we still wanted to play. Nick put up a flier at a music store and found our first guitarist, Zach, who plays on *America's Right*. Zach, by the way, has done some CD design for the Supersuckers and he lives in Seattle these days."

One thing that immediately separated Conflict from many of their peers was their lyrics, both political and cerebral.

Karen: "Things seemed so desperate at the time, as if nuclear war were right around the corner. We had no idea. I marched in my first protest against the Cruise Missile training at the nearby air base and watched my girlfriend's mother get arrested."

Naturally, the politically-charged nature of the group made them aware of the British anarcho band of the same name.

Karen: "About the same time as we started playing and recording we heard about them. That's why we added the 'US' to our name. Sometimes our records were filed in the same bin like we were the same band or something, which made me laugh. They had that great big spiky hair."

Bill: "Only 'cause I saw their buttons at the underground record shop downtown after I was in the band. I learned about the whole Crass thing, but I admit, English crust and hardcore never yanked my string. The music sounded slow and plodding and dated, boring, and preachy overall. I never ran out and bought their records."

Of course, there were other obvious elements that made them stand out. In the whitewash of US hardcore, Asian-Americans didn't make up a big percentage of the audience and even less on stage. Karen's presence as a vocalist was even more interesting in its defiance of any cultural stereotypes of an Asian girl. With an aggressive and upfront vocal style, she brought an especially unique style to hardcore that was born of West Coast music but was easily its own thing.

Karen: "Hardcore in particular became, in my opinion, tough, conformist, and pretty white-male-centered. It didn't start out that way, but turned into this clone thing, especially among the fans. No thanks. Some people took Black Flag's 'White Minority' not ironically, as it was written, but rather as an anthem. Or 'Guilty of Being White.' And then the actual diversity of people, musical styles and outlook seemed to be erased from our punk history until fairly recently."

Being a woman in the hardcore scene was no common band feature either. It would have been absurd for the group not to address issues of feminism and sexuality.

Karen: "I grew up in the '60s and '70s, during the days of half-court basketball (dribble three times and then you have to pass the ball), compulsory home economics for girls, the assumption that girls went to college to get a 'Mrs.' degree. I'd say Arizona was and to a degree still is way behind the times."However, I didn't seriously study feminist history and politics until much later and now see my earlier consciousness as a bit naïve."

Part of the success of the band was their unified voice, with the rest of the group coming to feminist and progressive politics in their own personal way.

Bill: "Women in rock were a given to me. My older sisters were into music, they were 'rockers,' they shoved the guitar in my hands. And I loved many bands where women played important roles. But alas, coming from such a vapid environment as the east side of Tucson, being stunted and immature, I must admit it took me a little while to fully understand the importance of what was happening, what we were doing."

With the local scene still taking baby steps, Conflict began playing live as often as possible.

Karen: "Many of the shows we played were tiny, tiny, tiny even if a fairly famous band like Hüsker Dü was the headliner. When I saw Hüsker Dü on MTV later on, I was amazed. Early on, the crowds were very mixed

photo by Ed Arnaud

and friendly, filled with people from other bands, artists, students, street people, nurses and doctors from the hospital, and friends. I think people were tired of hearing cover bands playing 'Stairway to Heaven' and were curious about us and the other bands."

It seems largely unthinkable today, but back in the early '80s, unwitting frats around the country were known for having bands play or hosting "new wave" nights, booking groups like Conflict, though usually only once.

Karen: "One time a fraternity house asked us to play a party. This was also during the time of racially segregated fraternities and sororities, of course, so I'd never been inside of one even though I had graduated from the University a year or so before. We played on the roof of a small building and somehow a bunch of our friends and people in the scene got into the party and formed a mosh pit, but most of the frat guys didn't know what to think about this really harsh music and probably me, with the inch long orange hair and armfuls of bracelets and spikes. They started yelling 'Devo' and 'Whip it' and throwing full cups of beer at us and our set got cut short. Too bad! Our friends had fun though."Phoenix had a whole series of colorful venues, including a Mexican-American dance hall, an old church, a (closed) ex-biker bar with no working plumbing, a wrestling ring. Few of these places lasted long. The police would come, close down the show and that would be the end."My favorite show of all time was with JFA at one of the later incarnations of the Vex, which was a really colorful scene."

As the group began to be known in the hardcore scene, a reputation for being politically aware tagged them, as it was fairly trendy for a time to slag bands for being "too political".

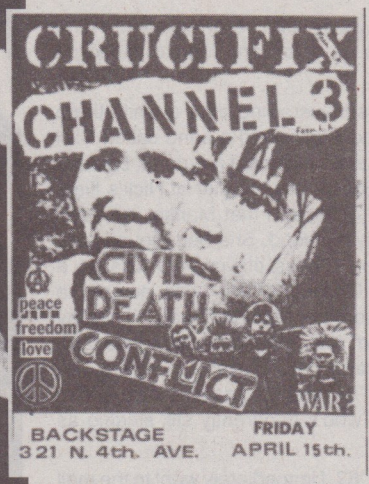
Karen: "I think some people thought we were overly serious, which was a fair observation, especially of me! One time when we were interviewed in New Mexico, our interviewer kept asking us question after question about politics and then wailed, 'Why do you talk so much about politics?' We laughed."

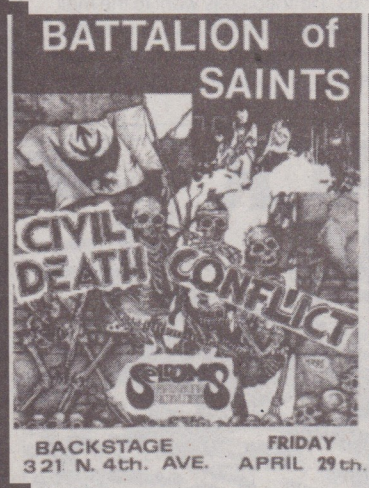
Whatever the talk about being too political, the group was making some friends and allies.

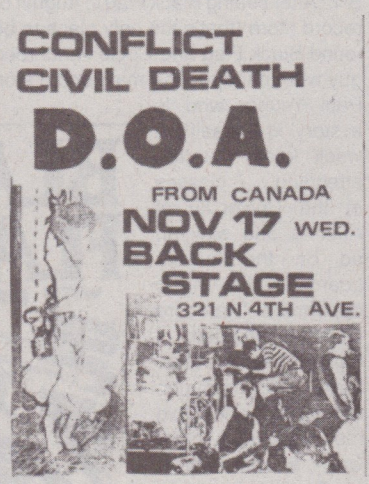
Karen: "I loved two Tucson based bands—Los Seldoms, which sounded a little bit like Beat Happening, and the Phantom Limbs, a punky country type group. And JFA of course, because of our friend, Michael C. For many years I was close to one of the guys in Black Flag. I met them when they were on an early tour (with Dez singing) and they stayed with me several times. I liked that they were smart guys, really focused on what they were doing and that they were, at the time, primarily vegetarians. They were always really nice to me. We also played with DOA a few times and I always liked them as well."

At the same time, the group, possibly because of their isolation in Arizona, didn't get involved in the different ideological trends in hardcore like anarcho punk or straight edge.

Bill: "Even after I made the leap from the clueless environs of Tucson's eastside to the downtown, University-centered hardcore punk scene, it was still hard to catch on to other trends, philosophy, without things like fanzines, which played an enormous role in those days. Mind you, the world was a different place before the internet. Anarcho philosophy was sort of de rigueur for all punks, the topic of most fanzines. I learned about straight edge through *MRR*, interviews with Minor Threat. I was so sick of pot, drugs, booze after high school, so sick of seeing what uselessness it led to in my lost friends, that I was mostly 'straight edge' before I had ever even heard of Minor Threat, before I joined Conflict. Plus I couldn't fathom doing well in college being stoned or drunk. I guess I was not your typical 'college student.' I'm glad I got all that extreme drugging and boozing out of my system







bove four flyers by Karen Allman

photo by Ed Arnaud

in high school."

Karen: "I owned every Crass album at one time but I don't think I really got what they were trying to do until much later when I became involved in collectives in Seattle. I was straight edge but not so militant about it. I'm just not a partier. Reading Noah Levine's book *Dharma Punx* really helped me understand what some of those really young, really wasted kids were going through back then. I didn't understand them at all and they irritated me. Later on I heard about homocore and I was proud to be claimed as an ancestor or an influence by some of these bands."

Achieving the minority, left wing trifecta, Karen was (and is) a lesbian in a very straight, homogenous scene. Though not a secret, it would still be another year before it became evident in her writing.

That first lineup recorded the *America's Right* demo tape. Seven tracks of raw thrash, the 1982 release was greatly reviewed in the fanzine community, resulting in a brisk mail-order business for Conflict.

Karen: "Not that many Tucson bands had recordings out. I thought it was great and was excited when people started ordering it and reviewing it. The cover and the notes were fun to do (Zach designed them) and I made some additional lyric sheets as well. Some of the fliers Zach and I made back then are up on Bill's website. I wondered if anyone would read the lyrics some day and think, 'I've felt that way' or know what I was talking about. It was exciting because sometimes people would sing along to some of those songs at our shows. I sent those tapes all over the US and to Germany, Ireland and other countries. This was, of course, thanks to Lee Joseph's interview in *MRR* and so many reviews in zines around the US and elsewhere. Later, especially after Bill joined the band, we could play better, more complex songs."

Bill: "That's before I was in the band. I learned about playing hardcore guitar from that tape, from Zach. I still think it was a brilliant piece of spontaneous, lo-fi, on-the-spot recording. Incredible guitar tone, mic'ing. When I'd ask Zach about it he'd just look at me sideways and say something like, 'Bill: that's the sound of a shitty guitar amp.' I still couldn't get over the beautiful inimitable tone. Now *that's* punk rock."

Rough and raw, the music is classic hardcore with apropos titles like "Sharp Step," "Alcohol And A Knife," as well as the title track. "White Skin" was Karen's first attempt at writing about racial issues, and even in this song she hardly takes the standard line of White America or Japanese America.

Karen: "I hadn't ever written anything about identity, about being Asian-American and mixed race, and I was starting to think and write about how I felt. I didn't really have the words to talk about it and was sort of feeling my way. I was throwing back some tired things people said to me over the years and trying to make sense of it."Neither white folks nor Japanese-American people liked the race mixing and people like me were visible evidence of their worst fears and maybe secret desires too. I didn't know anyone who was talking about these things until much later."

A DIY project, the tape was released on the band's own Unjust label.

Karen: "That was us: me and Nick. It started out as a joke production company name for a show we played with Black Flag but the name stuck."

Following the release of the cassette, Zach split the group to join Civil Death and Bill Cuevas was brought in on guitar and Mariko joined on bass.

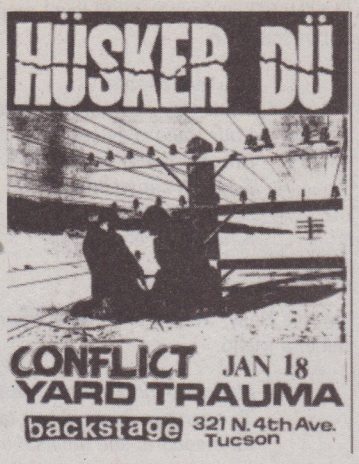
Karen: "We had a whole series of bass players and after a while there was some (ahem) conflict and Zach and Nick joined a band called Civil Death. Nick kept playing in Conflict and also became a promoter, booking many of the Tucson hardcore shows. Bill C. saw another of Nick's fliers at the music store and he became our guitarist. I met Mariko, our bass player, at the Red Cross when I was giving blood. She had moved here from Japan after meeting and marrying a bass player who was on a Japanese tour with the Philadelphia Orchestra. She was actually a pianist and piano tuner but, with help from her husband, learned to play bass after we invited her to join the band. After Mariko moved to the East Coast, we had about a million short term bass players, including Jeff Keenan of Phantom Limbs, Lee Joseph of Yard Trauma and Matt Griffin, who has played with many bands and who's apparently still singing as a solo artist."

Bill: "After seeing Black Flag in August of '82, I immediately went to the mall record store (that's the only place to buy records, right?) and, incredibly, found Black Flag and Circle Jerks records (but that was only 'cause the guy who managed the mall record store was an incredible man, the late Paul Young, who is a story in himself). A week later I started attending classes at the University of Arizona and saw an ad on the bulletin board in the music department: 'Hardcore Guitarist Wanted.' I dialed the number. Nick, the drummer, answered and told me that the band was a reformation of Conflict that had

flyer art by Raymond Pettibon

photos: below: Karen Walraven, right: Ed Arnaud

flyers by Karen Allman



broken up after splitting with their original guitarist, Zach Hitner, and bass player. Nick said that he drummed in Civil Death. CD opened for Black Flag on that infamous night. I was intimidated, weak in the knees, told Nick I wasn't sure I could do it. Nick said, 'Sure you can.' He gave me the Conflict seven-song cassette and I learned those songs to start."

Bill was a great choice to join the band, as not only was he a strong guitarist, he was also in-tune with the group's politics.

Bill: "That's what alienated me the most from my so-called 'peers' in high school who never read. I remember one day in high school going out to my group of stoner-rocker buddies and saying, 'Hey, Abbie Hoffman surrendered today' and they said 'Who's she?' That was a turning point for me, like, who the hell are these people? Am I the freak? Doesn't anyone care that Ronald Reagan might get elected president next fall? Isn't anyone as pissed off as me, or are they all just too stoned? Hardcore was a huge relief/release for me. I 'found my people.'"

The new lineup hit the ground running with some pretty big name shows at the start.

Bill: "Our first three gigs with me in the band were opening for The Gun Club, DOA, and Black Flag. How could we miss? Our crowds were happy to see the band again, reformed, and they encouraged me on guitar, the new style and sense I brought, not being a 'standard' hardcore guitarist, having come from a different school of playing, 'eastside.'"

With the group already having something of a following, shows by this point could be very wild affairs.

Bill: "Black Flag, Vandals, people letting loose and getting crazy and fun. But again, that might be a question best posed to the original Conflict version. Zach and them played shit like shoe stores and rooftop frat house parties, pelted by beer bottles, a year before the band re-formed with me. Hardcore in those days was met with either disbelief and no-holds-barred fun or with hippies/rednecks who wanted to take a stand for the 'old guard' and were ready to kick the shit out of you. There was no middle ground, nothing non-committal. But overall, people who were present, chose to be there, were really supportive. Crazy supportive. The venues and the music, if not the volume, weeded out the close-minded. They just left."

Despite Civil Death being made up of former members of Conflict, the groups remained close, as were neighbors to the north in JFA.

Bill: "Civil Death was formed with Conflict's drummer Nick and the band's original guitarist Zach Hitner and singer Lenny Mello. This was after the first version of Conflict broke up. They were family, needless to say. Black Flag, at least Chuck and Greg, were like out-of-state cousins and had a great rapport with Karen. The Vandals and Hüsker Dü were guys who we'd go get pizza with and shoot the shit with till all hours. But if we had a 'sister band,' that would be JFA. We toured with them, flopped on their floor in Tempe, ate Mexican food with them at every chance. Michael Cornelius, their bassist, produced our record."

All the same, it was difficult to find other groups like Conflict, especially with a singer like Karen.

Bill: 'Except for Sin 34, there were no other hardcore bands with women fronting them, center, in your face. Karen communicated with a lot of women who supported us, subscribed to her ethic. They may not have been in bands at the time but they were important artists and writers. Plus, Tucson was cool in that women were welcome in the 'scene,' were plentiful on the dance floor (aka 'pit'). It was tolerant, compared to other places."

Karen: "We played a show with CH3 and Crucifix once. The flier's on Bill's website. I now think this was a historic show but at the time I just thought, wow, we're on a bill with two other cool bands. I don't think I really talked that much with the CH3 guys because they were famous and I was shy but the Crucifix guys were nice. We played with Sin 34 also, and I felt like they were allies. I didn't really know many of these bands, but I felt a real kinship and respect for bands like the Bags, X, Alleycats, Penetration. The Chromatics, one of the early Tucson bands, had a female singer/musician and I always admired and felt a special kinship with them. She was also racially ambiguous/not white and so people thought I was her and vice versa, though we didn't look or sound at all like each other.

"Other supporters were Tim Tonooka, as I said, Hud from *Flipside*, who wrote an early article about us, Michael C. who wrote about us in his zine, *Gagging Dog*, and who later produced us. Calvin and Brett of Beat Happening spent some time in Tucson when they were 16 year-olds and left with a Conflict EP. Calvin played us on KAOS radio up here and also wrote about us in *OP*. Jello Biafra and Tim Yohannan were also supporters."

photos by Karen Walraven

In 1983, the band followed up the tape with their one and only record, a 12" EP titled *Last Hour*. Thirteen songs in almost as many minutes, the record is fierce hardcore, simple and direct, that perfectly captures that time period.

Karen: "We were really a different band by then. Zach had left and we had been playing with Mariko and Bill for quite a while. The demo tape was recorded on a 4-track in our practice garage in the Jonny Sevin house and the EP was recorded in a studio."

With little money to spare, the group recorded with pal Michael Cornelius of JFA. With his great studio instincts, the record sounds raw but solid, maybe urgent more than rushed.

Karen: "It was exciting, especially since it was the first time for all of us. We recorded it in a few hours one night in a studio in Tucson. Michael is a wonderful, goofy, smart guy."

Bill: "Because of our limited budget we knew we had to knock out all the tracking, overdubs, and mixing in six or so hours. Mind you, in those days recordings were done in pro studios, nobody had porta-studios, much less Pro-Tools, at home. In punk rock, limitations like that were expected, and in hindsight, what made the genre what it was. Like, 'this is it, one take, like it, live with it'—ironically, the way Miles Davis and Thelonious Monk worked. I had serious back pain, a blown disc, during the session. But aside from that it was a blast. Michael Cornelius did a great job. Like all great producers, he did things like make me re-record a track I thought I nailed the first time, crank things on the record I didn't think should be cranked, but after the record came out, those ended up being the best parts of the record. Michael Cornelius is a genius."

Leading off with a tempo-setting drumbeat, the album starts with the unusually melodic "Fester," almost reminiscent of early TSOL but faster.

Take a look around me
Good reason to be depressed
Hear women encourage rapists
Enjoy ourselves at best
Can't go out at night
Fear for myself but then
If bleeding women are funny
How about bleeding men

Karen: "Fester was a group of Ohio women who, fed up with violence against women in the scene, decided to fight back. Part of fighting back was speaking up about what was going on, banding together to protect each other, and putting out a zine to spread the word. A woman named Liz wrote to me about all of this and when I wrote a song about them, some guys got upset about it. I didn't name anyone but these guys outed themselves, saying, 'I never did anything to her!' So, according to them, you couldn't complain unless you, individually, are targeted! Ridiculous, though I was excited that someone had heard our song and that people were actually talking about what was going on."I had also seen a record cover that featured a woman getting her head split open with an axe and just wanted to comment on it. Yes, women can be on a record cover pictured in this way, but not singing in a band or saying stop beating us up? Liz, from Fester, drew the art on the lyric sheet of our EP."Songs like "Not Guilty" were a gut-level response to the racism of white liberal condescension.

You're a cheater
Think you can walk on water
Your smile is sweet
But your teeth are sharp
Say you can give me
Anything I want
Kind, white liberal soul

Karen: "Tokenism. Racism."

On "It's Easy," Karen talks most openly about her sexuality and coming out to a friend.

My friend thinks she owes it to guys
To open her pants if they talk to her
So insecure, she thinks if they're here
It's into bed or better off dead

Karen: "I had one close Japanese-American friend when I was growing up and I just adored her mom, who, it turned out, was telling my friend that "mixed-up" people like me were evidence that interracial dating was no good. Of course, my friend only wanted to date blondes and just hated being Japanese-American. I'll just put it in here that my friend's mom and dad spent their own teen years in an Internment Camp.

"So this friend was the first person I told when I had my first relationship with a woman and she told me that she thought I might have some kind of sickness. (Well, this was nearly 30 years ago!) Meanwhile she was sleeping with a whole series of these random, sketchy white guys, including a married border patrol guy who was indicted for raping undocumented workers he caught crossing the border. When she bought our album and read the lyrics, she was really happy that I'd written a song about her."

Though maybe not as blatant as some groups of today, there are references to sexuality and Karen's lifestyle throughout the record, a brave thing to write about in 1983.

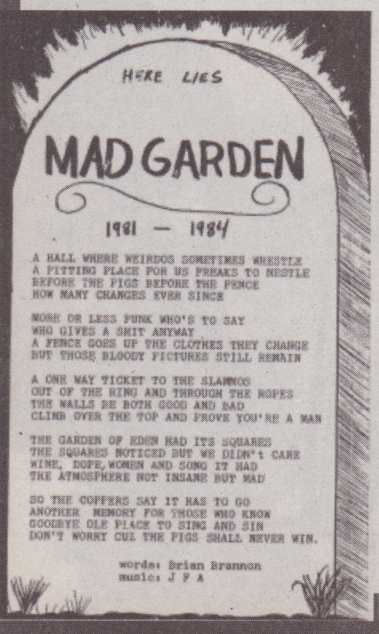
Karen: "I certainly tried to put them there and also put in all sorts of coy references to various lesbian icons and my then girlfriend, and some people have caught on. Olivia Records, for example, only recorded lesbians, but they were folkies. Now they produce these giant cruises."

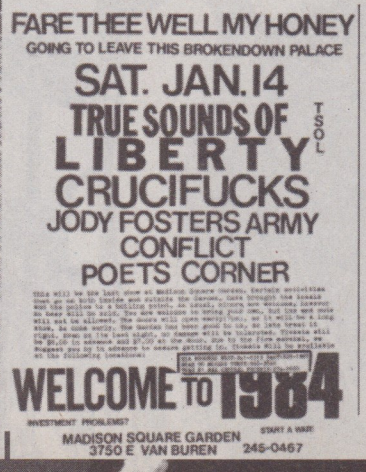
Though anti-Reagan, anti-society were a given for any hardcore band at the time, when a band had any sort of deeper political ideology it could still catch some people off guard.

Bill: "All hardcore bands at the time were political at some level—or at least anti-establishment. As far as relating to the feminist slant goes, not really. I think hardcore got plagued by a male machismo that was hard to cut through after about 1984. I think that ruined a good part of the scene, the male dominance. Good things come from a healthy mixture of both genders. I'd like to think that Conflict and Sin 34 inspired young women who took it to another level, opened the door for Donna Dresch, Kathleen Hannah, countless other smart young women. I always thought that bands like Conflict were, in a certain way, more influential than, say, the DKs or Black Flag. Seeing Black Flag left me feeling like when I saw footage of Hendrix, like, 'Why bother, I'm selling my guitar tomorrow, what's the point?' Bands like Conflict inspired people in the audience to think: 'Hey, I can do that, I can do that better!'"

Such upfront lyrics about issues that seemed more controversial in the Reagan '80s were mostly possible with a supportive, likeminded band.

Bill: "My main concern was the music. I pained over bringing new melodies and interesting song structures to each practice. Nick, the drummer, was brilliant in that he'd say things like, "Play that chord progression backwards." Then Karen would seamlessly start singing her poetry over the music we'd be crashing together. I would stand back and be amazed, the whole package. That style of song-smithing was altogether lo-fi, 'ready-made,' but alas very 'punk.' Karen wrote about murders that I read about in the paper, that touched her because her coworker was the sibling of the victim, the one who found her body (see "Listen to the News"). Stuff like that floored me. Karen's anti-war, anti-nuclear proliferation, pacifist, pro-woman themes touched me deeply and made me really happy that the music I was making was being given that





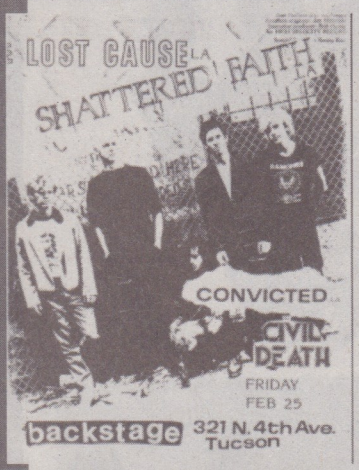
flyers by Michael Cornelius

voice. It changed me as I matured and understood better, to this day."

With a lot of the punk scene still reactionary against politically motivated groups, there were, on the other hand, a lot of kids that groups like Conflict spoke for. One such group was the aforementioned Fester Girls.

Karen: "They were a group of women from Yellow Springs, Ohio. Some were artists, others writers, musicians and other scenesters fed up with violence against women in the punk rock scene, both there and elsewhere. Not only were we supposed to endure it, we were supposed to be quiet about it."

below: photo by Karen Walraven, flyers by Karen Allman



Karen: "I've never heard a hardcore band whose studio record even remotely captured how they came across live. That applies to *Last Hour* especially. That said, I think the record is a great document of what happens when a responsible hardcore band (read: not throwing up drunk or tardy to the studio) sounds like when they have Marshalls and Les Pauls and six hours to record and aren't Minor Threat."

The cover art, a collage-style ink drawing, was a mixture of tattoo art and manga.

Karen: "A Tucson tattoo artist named Tim [drew the cover]. The drawings are based on pictures from Hiroshima and Nagasaki after the bombings. I also showed him comics like Barefoot Gen and 'I Saw It.' You can find pictures of all of us in the art."

Despite the big Placebo logo on the label, the record was in fact another release for Unjust.

Karen: "If you look closely at the label, it's another Unjust Production, just distributed by Placebo. Nick set it up with Tony Victor and I'm sure Michael Cornelius had something to do with it too."

Bill: "Placebo only distributed the record 'cause they were 'local.' I was in Conflict for about six months when Nick phoned me and said 'can you get 500 bucks?' 'Cause if all four of us could come up with 2000 bucks we could record and press 1000 records. Thank God I mopped floors and cleaned toilets on graveyard shift at a grocery store and was responsible with my money. Nick promised we would recoup. I don't recall doing that. Placebo only put their imprint on it and distributed it, with JFA, which worked out since we were close to them. The record was actually an Unjust Recording release."

This lineup of Conflict was also a touring unit. Over the course of the next year, the group hit several other cities spreading the word.

Karen: "Though those are some of my fondest memories now, touring also made things that much more tense between us. On one trip it suddenly hit me (even me—the resident Carrie Nation) why bands get so into drugs and alcohol.

"One time we drove and drove and showed up for this gig in Denver only to find that the venue where we were supposed to play hadn't heard a thing about it from the promoter who had booked and confirmed our show. But they were cool so we still played…in a gay bar with no stage. Fine, fine and people came, including one guy who shoved me so that I fell and hit my head so hard I saw stars. I still have the bump from it, and my hair fell out there and then grew back gray. On that same trip, though, we stayed with one of the guys from Jerry's Kidz and played a show in a lock shop. The scene was small and close and they couldn't have been nicer."

Bill: "We did a ton of gigs up in Phoenix, a couple in LA, Vegas, a tour to Albuquerque, Denver. That's about it. We were all adults, responsible. Sorry, no stories about stealing tanks of nitrous oxide from dentist offices like the Vandals. Not much boozing. We all had girlfriends or wives. Our tours were tons of fun, met great people, played to audiences that were even more receptive than the ones in Tucson. But I did freeze my ass off in the van in Denver, sleeping on a stack of amps in a snowstorm."

In 1984, the group appeared on Placebo's *This Is Phoenix, Not The Circle Jerks* compilation LP. Though from Tucson, the group was honorary Phoenicians for the time.

Bill: "Conflict and Civil Death people promoted most of the gigs, we made and hung the fliers. We did all we could. Hardcore and punk attracted me in the first place because it seemed to be welcoming, lacking in clichés. So a 'hardcore scene' always seemed liked an oxymoron to me, a contradiction. Unfortunately, the clichés existed, so in that sense I always felt like an outsider, especially coming from the low-brow white trash Ted Nugent east side. But we did everything we could, kept it positive, supportive.

"Tucson has always stood in the shadow of Phoenix, even though everyone knows that Tucson is a million times better place to live. The

scenes were pretty disparate. Girls could skank (slam, mosh, as the kids say today) on the friendly floors of Tucson. But not in Phoenix. Phoenix got gross and macho/violent long before Tucson did. Phoenix mirrored LA, while Tucson was—and still is—its own cool scene. It's no wonder all the out of town bands absolutely adored Tucson, loved playing there."

Alongside Mighty Sphincter, Zany Guys, JFA, Soylent Greene and an embryonic version of the Sun City Girls, Conflict contributed three new tracks, their best by a long shot. Even stronger production than the LP, the songs "Who Will," "See What I've Done," and "Feedback Symposium" were indicators of where the band was heading. Even the vocals were taking on a new character that was almost like the more thrashy Vomit Launch tracks.

Karen: "Totally new songs recorded nearly a year later in a studio in Phoenix."

Bill: "Placebo gave us 150 bucks to go to Phoenix's Desert Sound studios to record three songs in three hours, tracked and mixed by Sandy Lamont. Those songs represented a slightly more mature sound for us and the production was different, obviously. I was experimenting with even more different song and chord structures. Incorporating 7th chords and stuff. But the same 'one, maybe two takes, live with it' approach applied."

The songs were taking a more poetic approach lyrically, as suggested somewhat on the 12". "See What I've Done" was hardly a typical hardcore lyric.

> *He "can't stop" the beatings and she's through pleading*
> *If she leaves, he says he'll kill himself*
> *Two lovely children, three-bedroom apartment*
> *With a view of the sky*

Karen: "I was obsessed with the movie *Dream of Passion*, which is a retelling of the Medea story with Ellen Burstyn as the lead actress. Also, I'd heard about this woman who had drowned her children in boiling water and I couldn't stop thinking about her. I changed some details so it became a conversation between a husband and wife, right after she has killed their children."

By this point, Mariko decided to leave the group. After a short list of locals filling in, the group eventually split before recording again.

Karen: "We came back from playing a big show in LA and had this huge fight. And it was over. I was going back to grad school and didn't have the same kind of commitment I'd had. This was of course right at the point where we were finally getting some attention from *NME*, some offers to play good shows in LA and San Francisco, and, well, that's how it goes."

Bill: "I think we never adjusted to having to replace Mariko after she left at the beginning of 1984. The whole hardcore scene was changing too, venues were getting bigger and worse, bands were getting more macho, the music wankier, audiences more violent. It wasn't fun anymore. Bands like Suicidal Tendencies were all the rage, attracting a dumb, violent crowd. It felt to me like what I got into the music for was disappearing fast. Those idealistic, if naïve views were compounded by my increased class load at the University of Arizona, and my love for my studies, science, nature, ideas. I threw in the towel."

While for the most part not playing music anymore, the former members are all involved in diverse and creative endeavors.

Karen: "Bill is a scientist, has a son and is a DJ on the Stanford radio station, where he is known as 'Your Imaginary Friend.' Check out his website, www.shavedneck.com. Nick sold Harley parts in LA and played in bands with his wife, Micheline, who has a wonderful, wonderful voice. Mariko has two grown kids, teaches music and is the music director at an Episcopal Church in Virginia. I quit nursing and quit working in academia when I was a PhD candidate in nursing a few years back. Now I'm a writer and a bookseller working primarily on author events at a large independent bookstore in Seattle. I love what I do.

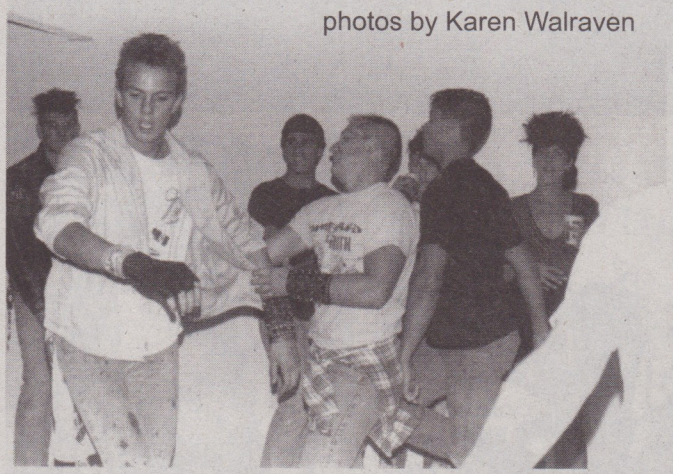
"My all time favorite band is the Fastbacks (they had two women, and one of them is Hapa). They are still my soundtrack these days. I just bought *The Way the Wind Blows* by A Hawk and a Hacksaw but I like all kinds of music these days."

Bill: "When you are that young, one to two years feels like a lifetime. I went through a lot, learned and changed a great deal. I had amazing times and I made that Les Paul/Marshall rig scream bloody murder. Unfortunately, being that age I think it's easy to take a lot for granted, especially the chemistry and talent that you are sometimes surrounded with. That's probably the oldest story in the book, why bands break up. I guess I regret not having turned a corner and taken the band a bit further, explored my musical side on that end a little more. The Butthole Surfers are so right on with that line, 'It's better to regret something you have done than something you haven't done.'

"...Anything that pushes the limits or is just undeniably beautiful. I'm really into experimental noise, that's the one genre that's been consistent for me for three decades now. I do love intense Grind, I love Mexican Norteno and Ranchera, Papago 'Chicken Scratch' music, I love all the things coming out on labels like Load, Deathbomb Arc, Mr. Records. Challenging fucked up shit, whether it's classic like Sun Ra or new like KK Rampage. To be honest, I don't listen to much old hardcore as a habit. Haven't since 1984. I've been DJing at Stanford's radio station KZSU for over six years, was Music Director there for three years, which exposed me to a wealth of music, contemporary and classic. I believe that we are living in the best possible times for great music and its availability, abundance. Unfortunately the last place you'll find it is commercial sources, including satellite radio. But the web provides great sources. Radio like KXLU, WKCR. You just have to actively seek it. Your iPod will not automatically download it. Going out and experiencing it live will never fail you. Without great music, life is not worth living."

Karen: "It's funny—I tell people about my punk past and a fair number have this mental picture of me hanging out with a bunch of white boys doing heroin. Instead I think about reading about X in *Slash* Magazine and sending $2 for their xeroxed lyric book even though I'd never heard them play. I think about drinking milky tea with the DOA guys at my apartment and Dave telling me about seeing the desert for the first time and trying to climb a saguaro cactus. I also remember how much fun it was to play with other people, write songs and to play shows.

photos by Karen Walraven



PISSCHRIST

PHOTOS: PETER HYDE AND JOH FAIRLEY
INTERVIEW: RICH MCCARTHY

MRR: Can you tell me your names, ages, and instruments?

Tim, D-beats, 27 years old; Yeap, constipated grunts, 26 years old; Dave, chainsaws, 25 years old; James, basso, backing constipated grunts, 29 years old

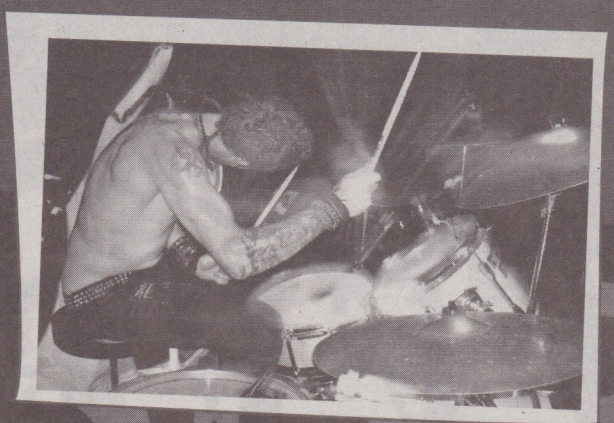
MRR: When did Pisschrist form and were you friends before the band? How did you end up with the line up?

Yeap: Well, we were all housemates at the Pink Palace warehouse. Besides just being a living space, we had a jam room and a hall where we put on all ages punk shows and benefit events. So, yes, we were all friends doing other things together like organizing shows, tours, events before playing music together. Tim started this band originally with Dave and James in 2003. I was the last one to join because I was traveling at that time. They had a few songs written and needed a singer so they asked me. The idea of this band is just to play loud, distorted, noisy, raw Swedish hardcore! We recorded a demo two months later.

Tim: Pisschrist is basically a side project gone out of control. I really wanted to play more raw shit than I had been but didn't have enough time to fully commit and most of us had other projects, but somehow it just took over. It's an easy band to organize and a lot of fun to play in.

MRR: Most of your lyrics are written in English—what's the other language you use to write your lyrics? How do you choose which language to sing in?

Yeap: Ideas that I can't express in English basically decide. English is my third language, so it's easier to write in Malaysian about some ideas and subject matter. Besides, some of these songs reflect my experience of home. It was a good feeling when we were touring in SE Asia that people found those lyrics relevant to them.



MRR: Swedish-style hardcore has become more popular in the last few years. Do you think the popularity has watered down the style or does it inspire people to write more memorable songs?

Yeap: I would think both really. There are now watered down version of Swedish hardcore and also people who are still keeping to the same formulas but pushing the limits. We have no pretension about what we do; we set out to play Totalt Javla Kang! And that's what we will do. Up the clones! Embrace the music, embrace the attitude!

James: Certainly, with the rising popularity of any musical scene, you get both a glut of bands that copy the style but don't produce anything memorable in the long term, and a few bands that produce gems that will be remembered as definitive examples of a style or sound. You just have to be prepared to wade through some piss occasionally. Trouble can arise when that watering down means a loss of integrity for a scene, especially a punk scene, where the same old slogans and ideas are regurgitated constantly, with no real intent or passion behind them.

MRR: What types of places do you usually play locally?

Yeap: We usually pay warehouses, squats, and bars. Basements shows are rare in Australia. In general there are not many basements.

James: Probably the best place to play at is the Arthouse hotel, a long running pub (fifteen or so years now with the current owners) that has been consistently the most punk-friendly licensed venue around, putting up with the usual stupid shit that can arise at punk shows, that few other venues would, and never having bouncers. They generally have faith in the punk community to deal with its own shit and (hopefully) stop any shit before it gets out of hand. Of course, that's not always possible, but they still have us back with open arms, and are on first name terms with most of the people who attend shows there regularly. Unfortunately, the end is in sight for this Aussie institution, with the familiar reason of development to blame. At the moment, Melbourne is lacking any kind of regular, stable all ages venue for DIY punk, due to the loss a couple of years ago of the Pink Palace warehouse, and the absence of a new warehouse in its place.

MRR: Did you notice any drastic differences between the shows that you played during your European and Asian tours and the shows you play in Australia?

Yeap: I think we have been pretty lucky that our crowd response at shows have been crazy! The only difference is that show attendance in Europe and SE Asia is so much bigger. There are not as many women at shows in SE Asia (although there

are more all the time) compared to Australia and Europe, but I think in general the energy and crowd participation is the same. Probably the Australian crowds sing along more. On one occasion when we were playing in Potsdam, Germany, Loffy from Cyness got up randomly and sang one of our Malaysian songs with us. He wrote all the lyrics on his hands in case he forgot. Another memorable moment was when this one-legged bloke in St Etienne, France chucked off his crutches and went totally spastic in the pit. Hahahah!

James: Most shows in Europe were in big squats, something Australia hasn't had for a few years. It was great being able to see the history of some of these places all over the walls and floors and everywhere else. Plus, of course, the amazing meals that people go through all the effort of preparing for bands are something else. There's better beer there too, even if it is warm most of the time (and we were there in one of the hottest summers on record). Plus distros, distros everywhere. SE Asian crowds are so enthusiastic it's incredible. It was amazing to play to 1500 in Indonesia and be told that it was a small show. People throughout the tour were so excited to be talking to traveling bands, show them hospitality, share ideas, food and drink, it was fantastic. Plus we played in a Thai nightclub on a revolving stage, a feat we're sure not to repeat in Australia. And again, distros everywhere, something you don't see a lot of in Australia.

MRR: You're touring Japan, the US, and Mexico this year. Are you facing any financial hardships because of touring?

Yeap: Well, we are still saving up to come over. It's very expensive to travel from Australia to anywhere in the world. We need all the help we can get to get home.
James: Yeah, I'm still in debt from the last tour, so, work, work, work for now—the joys of being a worldly rockstar.
Tim: It's an addiction. We're all pretty fucked for cash but we're having too much fun to stop. When it's not feasible to scam the dole anymore it's going to be a lot harder.

MRR: Is there any special meaning behind the name "Pisschrist," or did you just like the way it sounded?

Yeap: Well, there is no special meaning. It sounds rude and offensive. We get lots of reports on people getting hassled by religious fruit-loops about wearing our t-shirts. Our gig posters get torn down a lot in other towns like Tasmania and Brisbane. We got the name from T-banger (Tristan) who was living with us at the time. We needed a name to write on the practice roster. So he wrote Pisschrist and it stuck. When the actual artwork, Pisschrist, came to Australia, there was a lot of controversy and also a riot in Melbourne. I think that's hilarious.
James: It's a memorable name that is original, and as far as we know, unused by any other band, except for the Fear Factory song, but let's not linger on that point.

MRR: How did you come up with the idea of whistling to the riff in "Blood Bled Dry"?

Yeap: This was on the second day of recording. Tim thought that it would be a good idea to whistle to the tune. I thought "Why not? That would be great!"
Tim: I'd love to say it was a creative stroke of genius, but if the truth be told, I just stole the idea from an old Hiatus song. They've always been a favorite of mine.

MRR: Is the song "The River Runs Red" an animal rights song? Are you vegetarians?

Yeap: Tim, Dave, and James are vegans. I am vegetarian. Yes, that song is about the mindless slaughter of animals in an abattoir and the blood of the slaughtered being pumped to the river!

MRR: What was the last record on your turntable?

Yeap: Bastard Wind Of Pain LP
James: Uart Punk '81-'83 Demo and Live LP
Tim: Cop On Fire Visions of War LP
Dave: Totalitar Vi Är Eliten 7"

MRR: Is the artwork on your records as important to you as the music and lyrics?

Yeap: Yes, our artwork is made by myself and Ken Terror from Bandung, Indonesia. I think it's really important to have good artwork (it is subjective) on a record. We do put a lot of time into it.
Tim: It doesn't hurt having an artist and multi-media nerd in the band (Yeap) who lives for this shit. It's always the last thing to get done in the other bands I play in and always a headache but often with Pisschrist the artwork's done before we even record!

MRR: Do any of you play in other bands?

Yeap: ABC Weapons and Whitehorse who will touring the US from the 29th of June to the 14th of July.
Tim: ABC Weapons and Schifosi.
Dave – Straightjacket Nation.
James – Depthcharge and Tenderizer.

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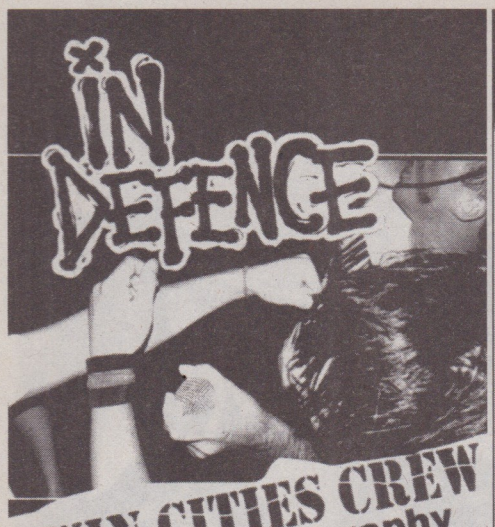

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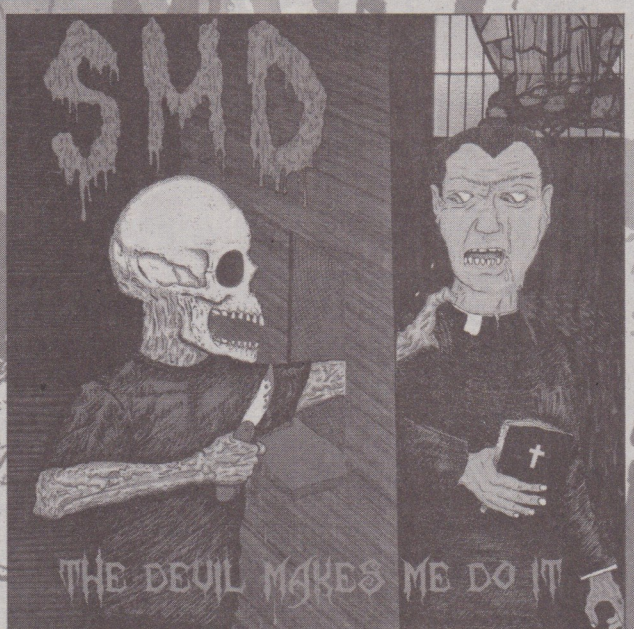

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the RATS

Interview with Umeå, Sweden's The Rats by Andreas Thrash-bastard.

MRR: Okay, first a standard introduction: Please introduce yourself and tell me who's in the band and what they do.
Mark: Nothing special over here. A usual hardcore five-piece. Emanuel and Johan take care of the guitar stuff. A guy named Erik hits the drums, whilst I sing and Patrik plays the bass.
Johan: Yeah, I "take care" of the guitar stuff.
Mark: I could "take care" of you.

MRR: The Rats has been together for a while, right? When did the band get together, have there been any releases, line-up changes-you know, something like a short band history…
Mark: To make it short, me, Erik, and Johan started playing hardcore together six years ago. Patrik and Emanuel joined one year later. We named ourselves Rabid Grannies after a bad Troma movie. Rabid Grannies existed for five years and then we changed our name to The Rats. Rabid released a demo, two 7"s, and some tapes in Russia and Indonesia/Malaysia and the Rats recently released a split 7" with Shut The Fuck Up and another 7" called *We Are The Rats*.
Johan: We did release a demo before Patrik and Emanuel joined too; I think it should count despite the fact that it's horrible.

MRR: Why did you change the name of the band and why into The Rats?
Mark: For many different reasons. None of us really liked the name Rabid Grannies. For me, it seemed too humorous to go with the lyrics I write nowadays. We also started to be more productive and kept on touring and doing stuff, so I didn't want to get mixed up together with Rabid Grannies who only made two 7" during five years and played only three times as many

shows as the Rats did in four months. The name came after we did the song "We Are The Rats." It felt fitting to me when it came to the lyrical content and what kind of people we surround ourselves with. Even if it doesn't come across in many of the lyrics, the main point of the band for me is to break away from bands that more and more act like rock stars and/or celebrities. "The Rats" doesn't refer to only us, but all the kids, organizers, and other people in the DIY scene.
Johan: It's also easier to make "The Rats" look cool when you write it.

MRR: What inspired you to start with a band, to start with Rabid Grannies/The Rats?
Mark: In the beginning it was just the fact that I wanted to play in a band. Being one of the guys/girls standing up on stage and having a blast. I really admired

went through my head at sometime and most of the time is still there.
Johan: I don't have much to add, except that for me it was to some extent born out of boredom. I was a little tired of going to shows with bands that most of the time didn't really appeal to me, so I wanted to be more involved. We were pretty young and hadn't really been in the scene for that many years, but this scene can get old pretty fast.
Erik: I thought all the hardcore boys were really cute and that the best way to get to them was to start playing in a band and join the scene.

MRR: Are any of you playing in other bands beside The Rats? Tell us about these projects!
Mark: I try to be in other bands but it seldom works out for some reason. I play bass in a band called Begravningsbyrån at

and stuff. Me and Emanuel also play in the band Man Boy and the No Brainers. We only exist in Iceland where we're currently living and our goal is to bring some attitude and sex appeal to all the poor souls over here!

MRR: What bands influenced you the most (personally but also as a band)? What bands do you listen right now?
Mark: When I got into hardcore Refused was more or less the biggest influence. Later on Code 13, ETA and Final Exit got me into the faster stuff that is more or less the kind of music I listen to the most. Heresy is a huge influence to me nowadays, as is No Comment, Black Flag and a bunch of other Cali-bands. Today I find few bands to really get me going but Tangled Lines, Instant Asshole, Fucked Up, and Love Songs do some interesting songs. Of course a lot of bands still do good stuff but it's

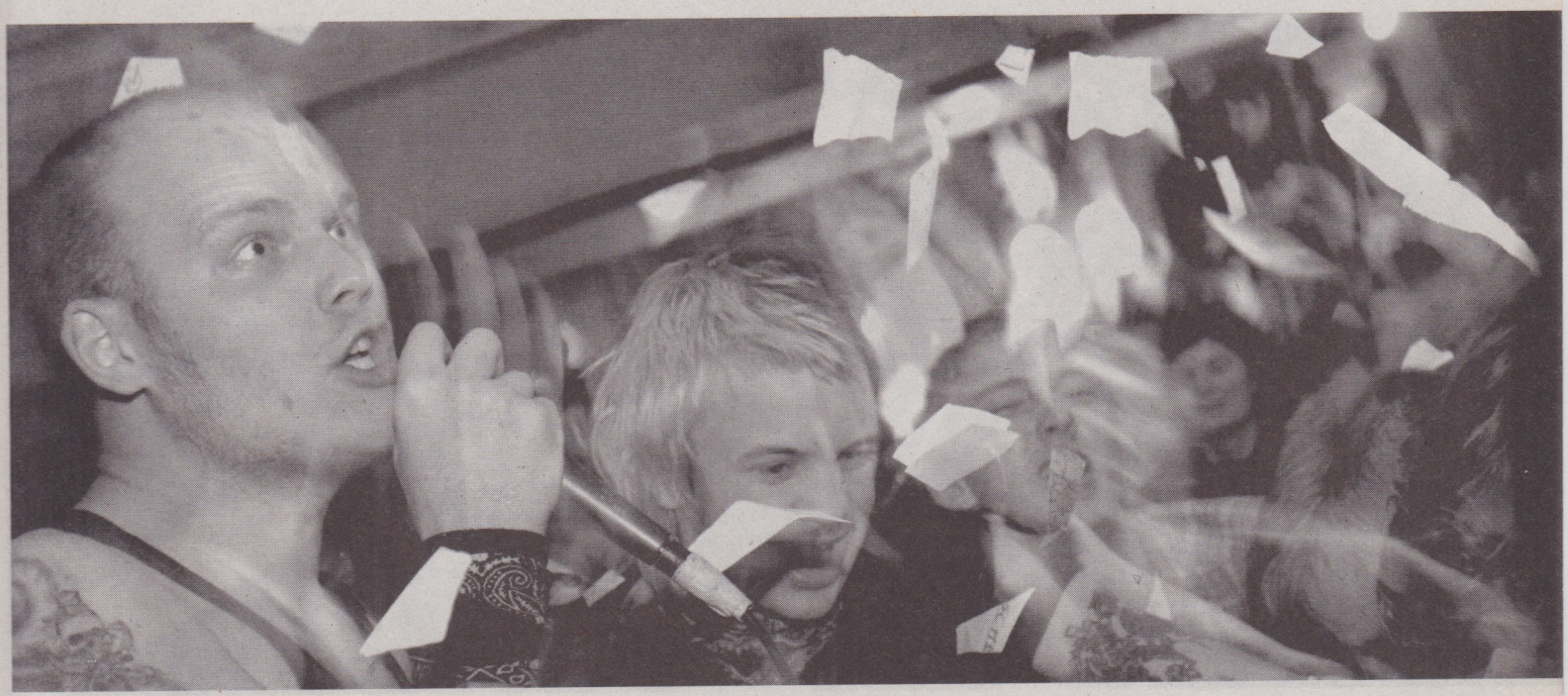
older and more famous punks back then but as I got older I grew to be much more fascinated with the kids. They are always the most passionate and have a really strong belief in the scene. I think once you totally fade away from this you should stop doing it. Being naïve can actually be a good thing sometimes to keep the scene really strong. Today, when I have this in the back of my head, I feel that the only reason I do this is that I feel very passionate for the things I sing about and as long as I feel that way and adrenalin keeps filling me at the shows I will keep doing it. I want people to see something real and maybe see that sometimes people psyched about what they do can be more interesting than people who can just do good songs. I don't want anyone to doubt anything I sing about after they have seen us play our set because everything has

the moment. It sounds very Danish, a bit like No Hope for the Kids. I don't like our songs very much but it's fun to play bass with a bunch of nice people, haha. I also have a project called Nerdic Assault together with my roommate but we mostly just talk about it. Last and least I'm planing a band named HEIU which is supposed to be fast, out of control, intelligent stuff. I'm still working on the blueprints...
Johan: I'm actually kind of a member of Nerdic Assault too, but maybe Mark didn't want to count me since I have only been at one rehearsal. Not much happening there. Otherwise I try to not be in more bands because hardcore isn't that big a part of my life anymore-I need time to do other stuff than playing the guitar.
Erik: I play the drums in the band Dick Cheney. We play some good ol' 80 HC. Fast

really not that special. I mean, Career Suicide is fucking awesome but nevertheless it sound just like FU's when it's fast and Germs when slow. I guess we are in many ways like that too, which is kind of sad since I really don't want that. But I'll leave it to my side project to do something different. Even if we don't, haha.
Johan: I got into hardcore around '97 which means that, yeah, Refused was the big early inspiration. However, when we actually started playing "for real" it was all about DS-13 and ETA for me so I think they were actually a bigger source of influence. I don't listen to a lot of hardcore nowadays, but when I do it's either some kind of fast thrashcore like What Happens Next? or the good old 80's Cali-stuff that Mark mentioned. I mostly listen to alt. country stuff like 16

Horsepower, though. I think I've gone soft.
Patrik: Bands like Nirvana and KSMB got me involved in listening to "hard" music in the early '90s, later on local heroes as Randy and The Vectors got me more interested into the hardcore thing. Imperial Leather and Entombed are bands active today that I find myself dancing to!
Erik: The Feelbrûter. Defenitely!

MRR: How did you get into hardcore/punk? Can you find a certain evolution in your life in relation with the hardcore/punk ideology? I mean how much does it affect your life nowadays?
Mark: Punk isn't a super strong part of my life nowadays. I don't agree with all the politics that you are pretty much force-fed at some places. Don't misunderstand. I like people that are politically correct but I dislike when they try to force it on other people-something that is much too common in the punk scene today. On the other hand, what still lives really strong for me is DIY. Heresy said it best with "Network of Friends" and sometimes I don't understand what happened between that and the 2006 DIY businesses that have erupted around the world. Although I have lost a bunch of cash trading records with people in Malaysia/Indonesia/Russia and sometimes I have gotten totally ripped off, I've also been blessed to get in touch with a lot of really cool people doing it. It just makes me sad when I see people saying stuff like "I never trade with anyone in Russia because they just rip me off" and when huge booking agencies rip DIY organizers and bands, criticizing them because they have to sleep on floors, don't get drinks, get 10 euro less than promised because the organizer had some unforeseen costs or whatever. If you tour too much to be able to stand this or if you feel too old to sleep on floors, it's your problem and not a problem within the scene. It's a sad truth I guess. On the other hand, maybe the reason you make so many friends on tour is that we are all in this together. You give some and you take some, not just take, take, take.
Patrik: I think punk has made a huge impact of my life, not that I can put my finger on what the difference it has made, but I believe I would not have had the same friends or ideals, and I probably would have made other choices in my life if it wasn't for punk and hardcore. I know some people that were really "hardcore" back in the day and nowadays are non-active punkers, but still they are vegan and have the ideals, etc. So what I want to say is: Once a punk, always a punk, in some way at least.



Erik: Ehh, what? I heard some good hardcore a couple of years ago and since then I've been stuck. That's It! I'm no punk kid, I just like the music.

MRR: What are you guys trying to get across with your music? Do you have any sort of goal?
Mark: I don't really have a goal. I do it because it gets some stress off my back and some hate out of my body and brain. Actually, I'm in one way satisfied playing awesome local gigs only. We will probably not get to the US or Japan even though we would really like to, but it has never been the point of the band either. Touring Europe twice was a privilege for me and not something I feel was natural just because we play in a band and have released two 7". I am very grateful to everyone who helped us out.
Patrik: My goal has always been to have fun and kill the daily routine in a constructive way. Releasing records and going on tours is always a blast but I feel happiest if someone that has seen us play gets inspired to dance or to start their own band.

MRR: What do you with your lives besides playing music?
Mark: I spend most of my time drawing, sketching, painting, and other art-related stuff. I write a lot of stuff too that I throw away since I don't want people to see it. I try to be productive most of the time and not waste too much time on videogames and drinking, even if it's hard to stay away from it sometimes.
Johan: Like Mark, I do a lot of drawing and such. I'm even more of an art nerd I think-I actually read lots of books and magazines about art and have even managed to collect some points in art history at the university. I read lots of pretentious literature and I go to hockey games. Man, this is a big question because I do so much stuff. It does illustrate that I'm not that involved in the scene, though, since I have so much time to do other shit. I also play video games and role-playing games, because I'm a huge nerd.
Patrik: I work as a nurse with mentally retarded youngsters. It's great work, no day is like the other. And it feels great to work at a place where the main goal isn't to make money.

MRR: You're from Umeå. Outside of the hardcore/punk scene almost nobody knows anything about Umeå or that it even exists. But in hardcore, Umeå is famous for being a city with all these legendary bands like Refused, Abhinanda, Final

Exit… How is the scene nowadays? What's it like being an Umeå hardcore band?

Mark: Sometimes it feels stupid. I have mixed feelings about it. The kids in Umeå are awesome and a lot of the bands are great, but Umeå has gotten too big in the punk scene just like Copenhagen and Portland. No band should be able to get shows based on where they are from or which bands they played in before. Still, Umeå is one of my favourite scenes at the moment and a lot of bands here really deserve attention.

Johan: I've never really felt that we get treated differently, except for that one time when someone had written on a flyer that we had members from DS-13.

MRR: Any good bands from Umeå you would recommend?

Mark: It seems like all the bands in Umeå have enough attention. I think Dick Cheney and Kommunen are the only bands that haven't popped up in *MRR* yet. We have Dröng too but I don't really know what's up with that...

Johan: I second that. Nothing to add really-most of the bands have members from at least one of the big Umeå bands so they get all the attention they need.

Patrik: Check out The Vectors-fuck off '77-punk-and if you're into "non-hardcore" music I would like to recommend Frida Selander-Neil Young meets Cher…haha. No, but seriously, it's great.

MRR: Are you involved in other activities in the Umeå scene?

Mark: Not really. I set up some shows with friends from time to time and write some zines. Activities in the scene are very limited worldwide I think. I like unorganized scenes where basement shows are set up by whoever. I'm not that much into syndicate thinking because at least in Umeå it just leads to certain people deciding everything and the only way to be involved is to help them out in their bookings and their plans. We've had a really good year where people have gotten involved from all ages and camps-something I think we all have the broken down Umeå structure to thank for.

Johan: I sometimes argue with people on the internet. Does that count?

Patrik: I lend out some stuff and give a helping hand at shows sometimes. I did release a compilation tape with bands from the Umeå area called *Siktape* some year ago.

Erik: I occasionally get involved in some awesome dancing at gigs. How about that?

MRR: I heard FINAL EXIT are gonna do a reunion show. What do you think about it? And what do you think about the fact that almost every band from the '80s and '90s is doing a reunion or even recording a new album nowadays?

Mark: I will go to see Final Exit for sure but I wish I could resist it. I think reunions are shit. Do something new instead of what you did ten years ago. It's hard. It's like getting all rich people killed. It's wrong but sometimes you'd really like to see it happen.

Johan: I think it's cool as long as they haven't all turned into hippies, you just hate to see that.

Mark: Didn't they do that?

Patrik: I really don't mind if bands have reunions or not… I mean, it's up to you if you want to go and see the show or buy the record anyway. Hopefully Final Exit will do a good show and I surely will go.

MRR: Before I went on tour in Sweden with a band the first time, I had the idea of a huge hardcore/punk scene with a bunch of activists, since there are so many and good bands coming out of Sweden. But at shows in Sweden there were always just a few people and it doesn't seem at all as spectacular as I expected. Too high expectations or what do you think? What's your impression of the hardcore/punk scene in Sweden, maybe compared to Germany or other countries you've already experienced?

Mark: I would say the German scene and the Swedish scene are pretty similar. The difference, I think, is that Germany has more people than Sweden. I mean, Gothenburg, Sweden is 500,000 and Stockholm is one million. These are the biggest cities here, so when not that many people show up in other cities it's not so weird. I guess the reason that so many bands have come out of Sweden is because we have always been a rich country. The punk kids get all their stuff from their rich parents, haha.

MRR: What about squating in Umeå or Sweden in general? Or any alternative houses/bars?

Mark: I don't really think it's possible, unfortunately. There are almost no unoccupied buildings in Sweden. It's been tried but has always failed shortly after the idea sprung.

Patrik: As soon as a building is abandoned, it's demolished, and if someone take the opportunity to squat it, the military police arrives. I believe Sweden has a zero-tolerance level against squatting. Once there was a house squatted in Umeå, I think it was five years ago but it was done mostly as a statement on the lack of youth centers in the city and there were no real plans of keeping the old ram-

shackle building. Since it was done in the middle of winter it got pretty cold when the municipality cut off the heating. The squatting lasted for a week but the message got through to the local newspapers and TV though!

MRR: You toured Europe for the second time last autumn. In which countries have you been? Please tell us a bit about your experiences! Any unusual or funny stories or any bad things happened during your tour? Any shows you like to remember? Any highlights/low lights? Surprises?

Mark: Bad stuff: Stupid French guys ripping us off, losing Italian shows, all the bad smell in the van, getting hassled by an Italian guy, playing Chemnitz outdoors at a pub in front of 30 people eating sausages. Highlights: Petting lots of dogs, all the party gigs, meeting people again, Andreas punching guys, Frank's history as a skinhead listening to Bullshit.

Johan: I think Mark is referring to a particular incident which was sort of uncomfortable, but really that Italian guy was awesome and not at all a hassle. Come on! The petting of dogs and finding a Bullshit record in Frank's collection are by far the best memories for me. Well, just meeting and getting to know Frank in general is sort of a milestone in my life. The gigs themselves were of mixed quality, ranging from totally insane to really awkward and frustrating. The worst one obviously being the one that Mark mentioned above in Chemnitz. The other one we played in that city was great, though. Playing at that metalcore show somewhere in Germany was a weird experience, especially finding out that the crowd actually didn't seem to think we sucked.

Erik: Well, we brought this guy called Frank The Fuck Up with us on tour with the hopes that he would help us drive, but every time we asked him to he just said he rather not. Frank, if you're reading this be sure to lock your door and windows in April. I'm coming to Berlin to kick your ass mafuckah!

MRR: And if you would have to compare this tour to your first one together with Dick Cheney?

Mark: This one was better, longer, and we lost more money.

Johan: Yeah, the shows probably had a bigger awesome-percentage last time, but they were so few that it really doesn't say much. You need a few crap gigs to fully appreciate the good ones.

Erik: Ah, gosh! I have the memory of a gold fish so how am I to answer that question!?

since they can't get as much social welfare, hehe. In a way we get money for touring. Sweden has a strong tradition when it comes to "study circles." Patrik can tell you more about that.

Patrik: "Study circles" is an old union thing I think, and it has been going on for over 100 years in Sweden. The original idea was to educate the working class and stimulate people to do creative stuff instead of drinking. You can meet a group of people and do anthing from learning Spanish, knitting, or playing rock music. Each time you are together in the group you get a smaller amount of money for keeping the activity alive, like buying strings for the guitars or a contribution to the rehearsal room rent. The money you get is taken from a fund that is labeled for cultural activities-almost every band in Sweden has or has had help from study circles.

MRR: The day you came back from tour there were general elections in Sweden and the alliance of right wing/conservative parties won. A lot of people I know and who are involved in hardcore/punk were really shocked. Do you really expect big changes for the Swedish welfare system? Or has this shock to do with the unique Swedish situation (a good welfare system that still more or less exists, long years of so-called left-wing governments, etc.)? I heard you can even get money from the Swedish state for touring... How does it work?

Mark: So far the change isn't that big but you can see that the government is leading us in towards the American way of corporate control. Stuff is getting more fucked up by the month so I'll guess all punks will be stealing a lot more stuff

Johan: To me, the conservative victory was all about the huge disappointment in middle class people falling for that totally blatant marketing strategy (their campaign was built around profiling themselves as "the new working class party"), but really I don't think it affects me personally in a big way since I'm sort of trying to get out of being dependent on welfare anyway. Like Mark says, you see these minor changes every day, and eventually they will amount to a pretty shitty society.

MRR: I think we are through. Thanx a lot for the interview and being such lovely Swedish bastards.

The Rats: www.myspace.com/666therats666

VILETONES

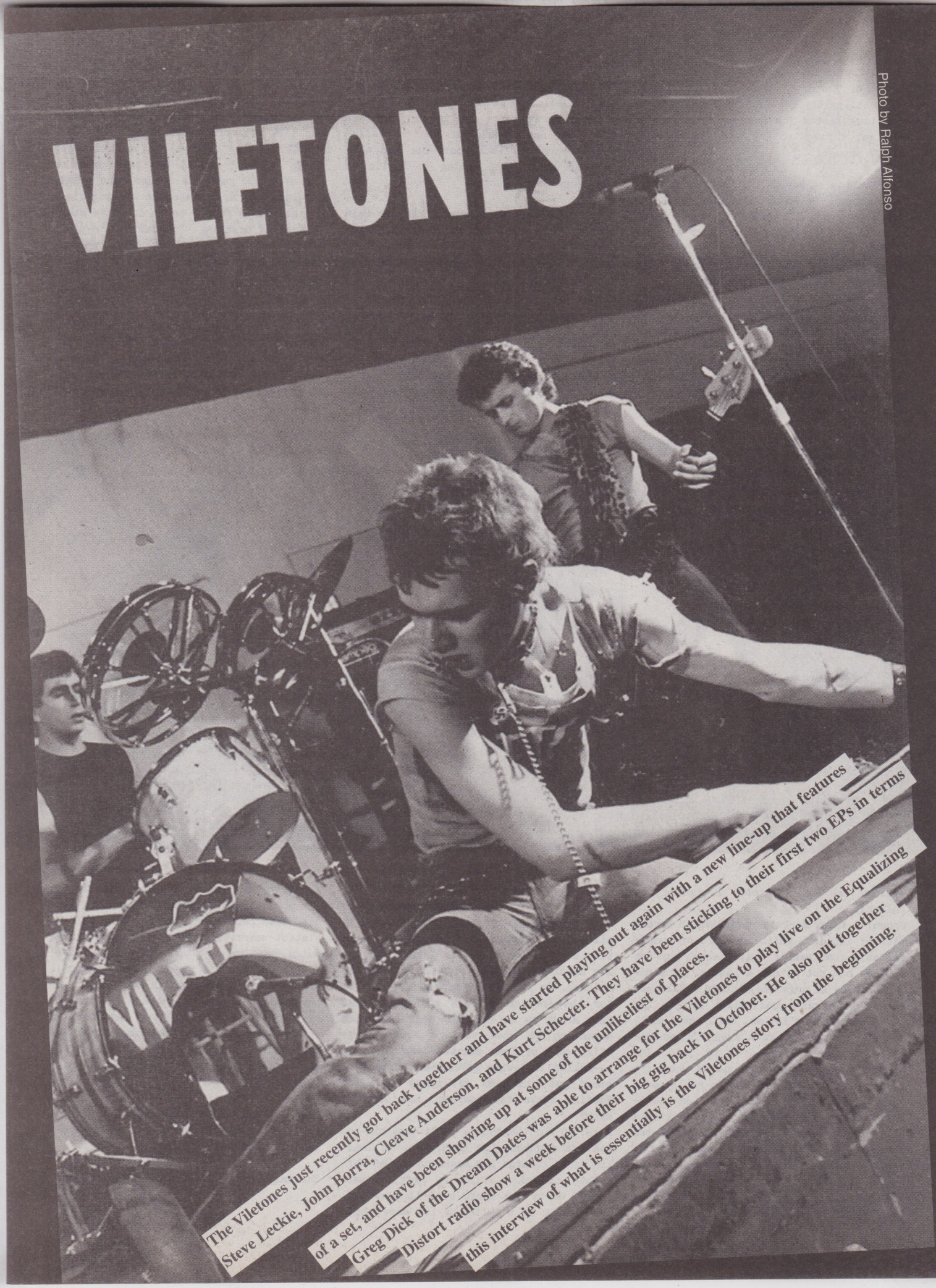


Photo by Ralph Alfonso

The Viletones just recently got back together and have started playing out again with a new line-up that features Steve Leckie, John Borra, Cleave Anderson, and Kurt Schecter. They have been sticking to their first two EPs in terms of a set, and have been showing up at some of the unlikeliest of places. Greg Dick of the Dream Dates was able to arrange for the Viletones to play live on the Equalizing Distort radio show a week before their big gig back in October. He also put together this interview of what is essentially is the Viletones story from the beginning.

MRR: Steve, I want to go way, way back to the beginning and then go up to where we are now with the current line up of the VILETONES. There are a lot of questions we want to cover and I guess we will start with: were you originally born and bred in Toronto?

Steve: Yep. You bet, man. Yonge and Bloor.

MRR: Beautiful. And which high school did you attend?

Steve: Northern until they kicked me out in ninth grade.

MRR: How old were you when you started going to rock concerts?

Steve: I started going to concerts when I was fourteen. I used to go to those Winter Pops. They called them Winter Pops every New Year's Eve at Maple Leaf Gardens. I saw Alice Cooper, Lou Reed, Mott the Hoople, and T-Rex. It was a religion to me.

MRR: Sounds like a lot of great shows that I didn't catch. What was your first exposure to punk rock?

Steve: I didn't have a first exposure to punk rock funnily enough, and that's why the Viletones are a punk rock band. You didn't get it from anybody else. You dig? In other words what came out of London, New York, and Toronto was this explosion that wasn't contingent on us knowing what other bands were doing. So I didn't get an exposure to it. I mean punk rock was to me like Iggy and the Stooges, the New York Dolls, maybe the Ramones, but we came out of the gun just like the Pistols, the Clash, the Damned, and the other bands regardless of any punk rock labels.

MRR: Yeah and what exactly was the groundbreaking moments in punk rock can be disputed. How did you meet Freddy Pompeii, Chris Hate, and Motor X?

Steve: I put an ad in the *Toronto Star* looking for a… I think the ad headline was Stooges, MC5 seeking blah blah blah, and low and behold Freddy Pompeii was a draft dodger from Philadelphia up in Toronto. You've got to remember, man, this is in 1977 so it wasn't unusual to see American draft dodgers up here then, and he was the first guy to answer and 'Boom' locked him in. He played with the Syndicate of Sound, "Hey Little Girl."

MRR: He was in that band?

Steve: Well, yeah. He played guitar on that single. They were the first guys that answered the ad and they were the first guys I hired.

MRR: That's the first time I ever heard that. Obviously the Dead Boys covered that song on *Young Loud, and Snotty*. What were the first Toronto punk bands that you saw other than your own band?

Steve: The first Toronto punk bands I saw outside of the Viletones were the Ugly, and the Curse; there weren't a whole lot. You also had the Dishes and Rough Trade who were kind of around the periphery, but they were getting a little long in the tooth. But I would say the Ugly, the Curse, B-Girls, Diodes, and Teenage Head—Teenage Head were fucking awesome.

MRR: Yeah, they were amazing back then. I think I know the answer to this one, but which show of the local bands were you most inspired by other than the Viletones, of course?

Steve: I think the best band outside of the Viletones—you see it's not enough to be good, you've got to be better and what we lacked with sheer musicianship we made up for in charisma and other things—but the best band musically and sonically and with a front man was Teenage Head, I think. Teenage Head were awesome.

MRR: I think they had a few years' head start on a lot of the bands as far as being together as a band. They were obviously good musicians. Your first gig was at the Underground Colonial and this gig has always been legendary not only because it was your first gig, but also because it was the first time you cut yourself on stage. I guess a little bit of Iggy Pop inspiration or there was a bottle handy. Were you guys the first punk band to get booked into the Underground Colonial?

Steve: Yeah. For sure. Absolutely. And that was through Jimmy the Worm who was Chris Hate's brother. Jimmy has passed away since. He booked us, Ronnie Hawkins, the motherfucker was playing upstairs at the Colonial. We were downstairs, but we were the first punk band to be booked there. Yeah.

MRR: Eventually the punk groups started playing upstairs there.

Steve: Yeah.

MRR: Tell us about the Blake Street Boys.

Steve: The Blake Street Boys were a bunch of Irish kids that lived at Langeley and Logan that followed the Viletones because we were an East End band. We identified ourselves very strongly with Pape and Danforth and Langeley and Logan and Queen and Logan. This is the '70s so it's different than it is now. There was tough chemistry and we wanted these boys to know that they had a voice in the Viletones I suppose, and they were tough motherfuckers. You knew them.

MRR: Oh, I knew them.

Steve: And every show we did, the Blake Street Boys were there and it was good fistfights aand that's the way it was in those days. You'd have a good punch out. I mean a serious punch out, but then maybe you'd buy the guy a beer at the end of it. It didn't mean that you were going to fucking shoot him, like now.

MRR: I have memories of you standing on tables swinging a chain while those guys were doing their business, which were some pretty crazy nights at many of the local establishments. And talking about the city, it was just so different back then. Yonge Street was a total cesspool. I don't think a lot of people even have a clue what our city used to look like. It was almost like Amsterdam with the girls in windows.

Steve: That's a good way of putting it.

MRR: Really, really seedy.

Steve: No, it's the best way of putting it that I have ever heard. Like Amsterdam. It was really seedy. I mean, every other door when you walked down Yonge Street from Bloor was a massage parlor, a place to get jerked off, strip joints and hookers. I mean that's what Yonge Street was, and that's what everyone knew it was. The whole country knew it was that. And when you had the killing of...

MRR: Emmanuel Jacks.

Steve: Thank you. Then it all went upside down. The whole city changed.

MRR: That's when that all got cleaned up. Freddy Pompeii, the guitarist from the Viletones and I believe it was his wife Marguerita Passion had a store called New Rose. Where was New Rose?

Steve: New Rose was at Queen and Parliament. Bad part of town but for the Viletones it was good for business. Queen and Parliament in those days wasn't that much different than what it is now. That was kind of like our clubhouse. She was making really cool clothing. It was the only punk store

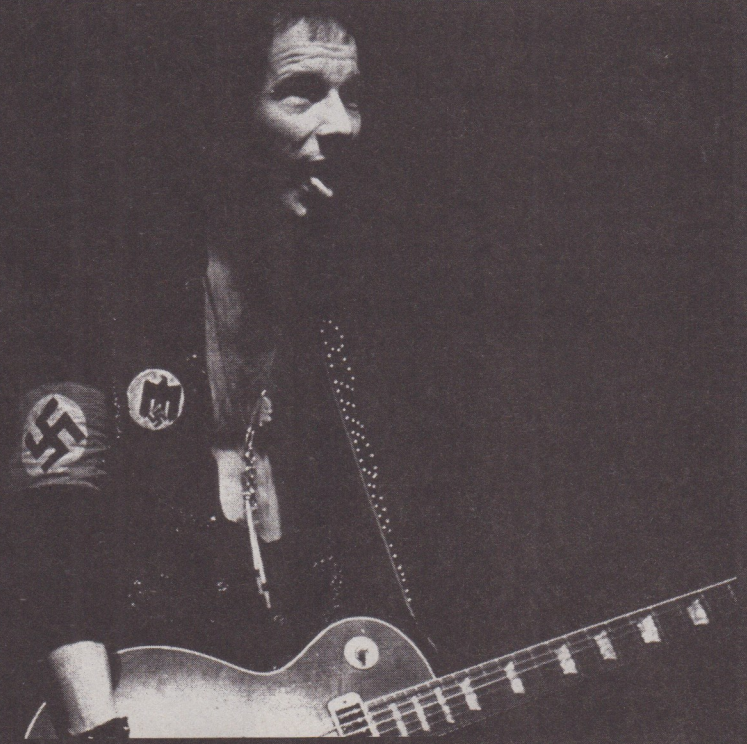


photo by Gail Bryck

in the city at the time. Punk store meaning where people could buy clothes, *Punk Magazine*, and T-shirts and, you know, jeans and shit like that.

MRR: No, it was a really cool store. You could get t-shirts and I remember there was a back room and either you guys would be hanging out in there or Teenage Head and it was a really special place. I mean, one thing about the Toronto scene, again, that a lot of people I don't think realize, was that we were right on the ball right in the beginning and we had that stuff at the same time as Tish and Snooky had their place on St. Marks.

Steve: Right. Manic Panic.

MRR: Manic Panic was their store. Trash and Vaudeville was across the street. Famous for their hair color of course. You, along with the Blake Street Boys, were sometimes known to give certain bands a hard time, for example, say, the Cardboard Brains or the Government. What do you feel was the difference with those bands and the Viletones?

Steve: Fuck, man. You know, I got to tell you, that's one thing that does still trouble me, why I got a notion in my head to be such a drooge on them. Like, why did I have to be so Clockwork Orange just because I didn't appreciate the kind of music they were producing? Why did that mean I had to react violently against it? Why couldn't I have just let it alone? Because I should have. So, when you do a bit of soul-searching so to speak, it does bother me, because I think actually what the Government were doing, and Cardboard Brains, was incredibly musical. It was actually really good. It's like Johnny and the G-Rays. I would never fuck up with Johnny McLoud, but he was really better than Tom Verlaine I felt. And Andy Paterson, what all those cats were doing…it's just that I was on such a mission, man.

MRR: Because the Viletones were on a different planet. You guys were living it 24/7 and playing it pretty hard I think.

Steve: It was bad. It was just bad all the time. A lot of Jack Daniels, a lot of MC5, a lot of *Raw Power* and the Stooges.

MRR: ...and a lot of attention.

Steve: So it gave you this mindset. I should have been cooler with some of the other bands, you know.

MRR: Well, it's kind of like you're coming clean now. Not that that's what I was looking for or anything. Tell me about your first gig in New York City and what was your first impression of the scene in New York City.

Steve: The first gig in New York I went with a couple of guys from Hamilton. They drove me down and they had a real cool Mustang car.

MRR: Do you remember who it was?

Steve: It was friends of Teenage Head's. If we had enough time we'd talk about it. A big guy. He looked like a fucking angel.

MRR: Well, there were a lot of bikers in Hamilton. Funny, a lot of bikers used to like the punk groups.

Steve: Oh fuck yeah. Well that's what CBGBs was all about, right? If people really know their history, 3rd Street was…

MRR: …the Angels clubhouse.

Steve: It was right fucking there, so… It's all Hell's Angels turf, so we went down. I talked Hilly into booking us.

MRR: You booked the gig yourself?

Steve: Yeah. I think I had Nick Stipantz with me, the first Teenage Head drummer.

MRR: And how did you convince him, over the phone?

Steve: No, it wasn't over the phone.

MRR: Oh, you guys were down there.

Steve: I drove down there. There's Hilly and there's me. Hilly is like 6'6" and I'm going, "You won't believe what I have got for you. I'm a real cool motherfucker, blah blah blah" and I keep talking and he goes "Alright. I'll give you a shot" and he gave us a week. The first crack at CBGBs was for a week.

MRR: You played a week straight.

Steve: A whole week with the Diodes, Teenage Head, the Curse—you know, a bunch of Toronto bands. But I played there several times.

MRR: Wow. That's great. You said of the New York bands that there was a ten-year gap in age compared to our bands and that you feel that it was the English bands that changed the complexion of punk.

Steve: Yeah.

MRR: It seemed like the English were the guys that started getting the fancy haircuts and just getting a little bit more style and taking it a step further. I guess a lot of the New York bands, when you think about it, were Talking Heads who really weren't a punk band, but were a part of that, Mink DeVille who we respect a lot, Television—these guys were all kind of wearing plaid shirts and had bowl haircuts. You guys must have scared the hell out of them when you went down there.

Steve: Uh huh.

MRR: I think they pretty much only had the Dead Boys or a few bands that were out of town that were living in New York. In today's *Toronto Star* you are quoted as saying "I may be the last guy standing. Me and Dave Vanian of the Damned. John Lydon doesn't count. Never did to me because the Sex Pistols weren't a real band." And you go on to compare them to the Monkees. It's actually a fairly accurate portrayal.

Steve: Yeah, I wish more people would get hip to that. The Pistols are not an actual band that organically formed and then a manager got wind of them and said "Okay, let's make a record." It was a project that a manager picked the guys that would be in it, you dig?

MRR: Yeah, yeah.

Steve: There is nothing genuine about the Pistols.

If you put Chris Thomas, the producer, after Chris Spedding and Virgin Records and all that money behind it—trust me, you could make any four guys sound cool. That's not to take away from the power of a song like "Anarchy in the UK," but the Sex Pistols are not a real rock band. If they had come from Toronto, they'd be no different than the way we view the Forgotten Rebels. No different at all. They are just the Forgotten Rebels, but they've got that huge Virgin Records/A&M money behind them. So I have a lot of contempt for the Sex Pistols, but not for Malcolm McLaren.

MRR: Malcolm McLaren spearheaded the whole project and turned it into a money-making machine and they were almost perhaps his puppets. I know that you met Malcolm McLaren a few years ago. What was that like?

Steve: Fucking awesome. I love Malcolm McLaren. I love his philosophy. I love his managerial skills. Everything about him. I love the Swindle. I love a guy who "I'm conning you and I am going to show you how I am conning you and if you want to keep being my friend you're going to get hurt, but you are going to have a lot of fun in the meantime." That's kind of cool.

MRR: I guess he wound up getting the short end of things when they finally went to court though. I guess they wound up getting a lot of money from him.

Steve: So they say.

MRR: Who inspired you more then, the English or the Americans?

Steve: The English bands. I think the Viletones are essentially rooted in the feel of a band like the Troggs and the Animals. Eric Burden and the Animals. Not anything to do vocally, but musically I would say the Troggs, the Animals, and there is a bit of MC5 in there, which is American. A bit of Who, but I think that's our reference points. We're not too broad. I don't feel we are anyway.

MRR: I remember you guys did a gig at the Horseshoe. I have pictures of it. Opening for the Troggs. Did you get to meet them after?

Steve: Yeah. Fuck yeah.

MRR: Yeah, that was a great show.

Steve: Yeah I know Reg Presley.

MRR: I think it was him and the original drummer. I think that was it. Something like that.

Steve: Yeah, it couldn't have been the whole band.

MRR: And another gig, a really cool gig—I wasn't there so I didn't see it, but I wish I did—was when the Viletones played with Edie the Egg Lady. When you did that gig, did the Viletones go on first or did they just do it?

Steve: It was the Viletones without me, and Edie and Chris Hate and Freddy Pompeii came up with a set during sound check that was good enough for them to do an actual performance. But it wasn't anything particularly planned out or anything. Yeah, that's how that happened.

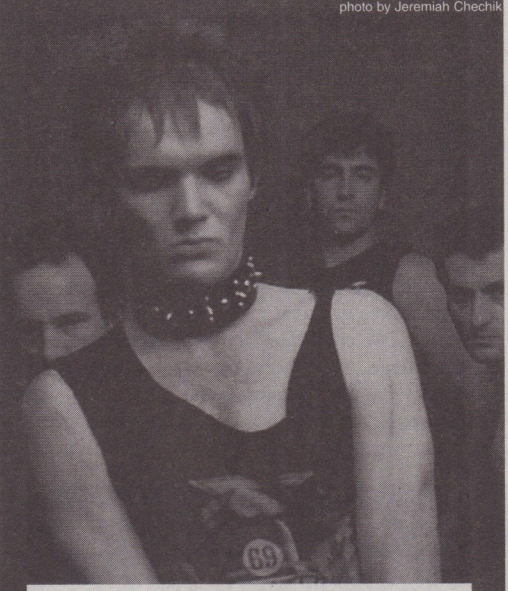
MRR: I hear there is an actual recording of that floating around somewhere, which I would certainly love to hear.

Steve: Yeah, there is I think.

MRR: There must be one lucky guy who has all that stuff. Can you explain the character of Nazi Dog?

Steve: The character of Nazi Dog is actually a symbol of freedom. A symbol of rebellion and freedom. In the '70s it was so loose with everything, pre-AIDS, pre-MTV, that the swastika—man, look at the Kiss logo. It's got the SS. The motif of the swastika with Sid Vicious and Siouxie and the Banshees and everything, it didn't mean anything like you were anti-semitic or a nazi. It was like you were giving the middle finger to society. You were like rubbing their nose in it and saying like 'Okay, we're free, we're really liberal, this is the '70s so let's see just how far we can go,' you know. If you look at an old Roger Corman biker movie, a bad biker movie with Jack Nicholson before he became a star, you'll always see the guy three people down and you'll always see a cat looking all wild and that kind of stuff who is wearing the big swastika, but it didn't mean he was anti-semitic. It was

photo by Jeremiah Chechik



fucking loose. It was rebellion. It was like, 'Well, you want to give me liberalism, how much are you going to give me?'

MRR: I think things, I mean you can't do pretty much anything half to the extent that you could back then as far as political correctness goes. You get watched a lot closer now. And just for anyone out there wondering what we were all laughing about, there is a band from Aucken, Germany who contacted CIUT and they released a new album and it's called *Chase the Man* and they have named themselves the Nazi Dogs as a tribute to Steve, which apparently has ruffled a few feathers over in Germany. The cover is a take on the *Easy Rider* album cover.

Steve: That is fucking so cool, man.

MRR: And the two guys on the album cover, on Harleys, one guy is George Bush and the other one is Adolf Hitler. And Adolf has his Evil Kneivel suit on.

Steve: Did you see that? Holy fuck is that good.

MRR: You're getting a band named after you, Steve, that is pretty good stuff. Okay, during a 1977 CBC film clip you talked about being stabbed in New York City. How did that happen?

Steve: I was on the stage. I was singing, doing my routine, and a chick came up—this was in the Summer of Sam, right? There was a lot of real—it was like *Taxi Driver*. New York in those days was like one long Travis Bickle. I'm doing my fucking thing and she comes bolting out of the crowd and like a picador, what you do to a Mexican bull, and stuck me. It happened right in my fucking foot. Thankfully Mary, Gary Cormier's sister-in-law, took me to St. Vincent's Hospital in the Village.

MRR: Yeah, I think I got Johnny Spacely out of there once.

Steve: So that's what that was about. It was just a random crazy fucking act.

MRR: Was that during your weeklong stint?

Steve: No that was another show. That was another period. Another time that we were playing at CBGBs.

MRR: In the same interview you also said that violence was a part of your life and you pulled a screwdriver out of your sock I think and made a statement that you were surprised that you could bring a screwdriver around with you on the streets of Toronto for protection but if you carried a knife you would have got arrested. You could do a lot more damage with a screwdriver. I guess back in those days and being a punk walking around the streets, that came in handy once and a while.

Steve: Yeah. I'm sorry to say, but you know Greg, in those days, as you will remember, punk rock was a bloodsport.

MRR: Oh, you would constantly—I don't think younger people actually understand that—sometimes I feel like we died for their sins for these little kids walking down Queen Street with their Marilyn Manson look-a-like gear. Back then we didn't even look a tad like that but we were chased and…

Steve: Yeah. It was hardcore, man. Real hardcore.

MRR: It was different, but that's what made it great. It was such a small, cool scene but it was such a strong scene. One of my favorite quotes from that interview, you said "We're trying to create a generation gap because there hasn't been one in years." Do you feel you achieved that?

Steve: Yeah. I know the Viletones did. We fractured, and I mean that's all I lived for. I wanted to fracture Fludd Goddo and Mornington Drive and Rough Trade and give kids a sense that this cat is singing for me. He's lost, but he's got a voice and I'm lost but I don't have a voice, but I am going to follow that. We created a generation gap. And that was my little reward. Everyone else got all the cheese and all this stuff. I got that.

MRR: Who thought of the name the Viletones?

Steve: I did.

MRR: Did you have it before you meet those guys or was it something?

Steve: No, it was before. Yeah, I mean, I had sort of a weird concept. "We'll call it Viletones" and they were like, "Why would you have a deroga-

tory name for a band? Shouldn't it be something favorable?" I'm like, 'No, no. Let's make everything negative and bring that to the forefront and that'll be cool.' And they kind of went along with it. Yeah, Viletones, Nazi Dog, "Screaming Fist," fuck, that's a sure fire way to… How can you lose?

MRR: I remember after that point everybody was coming up with Johnny Vomit and Joey Shithead and I remember I introduced myself as Greg Dick to people and people go, "That's a cool name, man. What's your real name?" And I'd be saying "No, that's my real name." They wanted to see my ID and I would show it to them and they thought I changed my name or something. Making a record in the late '70s was harder and much more expensive than it is now. How did you finance the first two singles and how did you distribute them?

Steve: We had to borrow money. We had a so-called manager situation. But what is really groovy about the Viletones is—see, you think about this—is the Pistols are on Virgin/A&M. The Clash are on Epic. The Dead Boys are on Sire. The Ramones are on Sire. The Viletones really do have their own label. We put up our own money for "Screaming Fist" and you can say the Viletones in the same breath as you can say the Clash and the Sex Pistols. That's astounding. Think about that. You know what have you done with your life? And this is 30 years later that people are still talking about it. I can die any day, man, and God knows I want to, and just to have people say "There was a cat who fucking lived. He fucking lived." Because that's awesome. When you really think about it, it's almost like, anyone listening to this... Any kid band just like I was when I was eighteen, you put five grand up. Five thousand lousy dollars and you go toe to toe with the biggest fucking names in music and are still talked about 30 years later.

MRR: That's excellent.

Steve: It's a motherfucker, man. Jerry Lee Lewis style.

MRR: But the second single, wasn't it on a different label? Did you name it something different? It had a red label.

Steve: Yeah. That second one was on Razor Records and that was with Roger Mayne who was in the Ugly Ducklings, which ain't a bad pedigree—hey man, if I am going to hang out with someone, I want to hang out with the guy who wrote "Gaslight." He has since passed away, but Roger was, well, he looked exactly like a Brian Jones. They opened for the Stones at Maple Leaf Gardens so that ain't bad company.

MRR: Did those records make it over to Europe? I mean, I think half of them are in Japan now.

Steve: I would look on the internet and the Vletones shit is crazy….

MRR: Yeah *Look Back in Anger* seems to be going for the most right now because it seems like it is totally unreleased whereas the first one has been bootlegged numerous times.

Steve: We're doing good so that when John Bora, Cleave Anderson, Kurt Shefter and myself, when we hunker down, get a battle plan, we are going to pay some attention to Europe, recording and performances outside of Toronto. We want to really give this a run. We've all committed ourselves to a certain timeframe that I will keep to myself, but we are all very committed to understanding that we've got something here and it needs to be looked at.

MRR: We could feel that from tonight's performance. Was there ever any major label interest in the Viletones in the '70s?

Steve: Yeah. There was and it has been documented and our friend Blair has all that documentation, but the thing was we were snagged up by Mega Media. Our biggest interest came from was Casablanca Records.

MRR: Wow. Neil Bogart, Donna Summer and Kiss.

Steve: That's right.

John: And Parliament, too.

MRR: What happened? Did they come over and party at your house or something?

John: They met them. (Laughter)

MRR: Are there any unreleased recordings from the '70s?

Steve: Tons.

MRR: And are they at your disposal?

Steve: We've got a web page set up, www.viletones.net, and we're going to be putting on some of our unreleased shit and also some footage from the past and some current stuff, as well. So it'll give the kids an opportunity to hear exactly what you're talking about. But yeah, there is a lot of stuff that was unreleased that we are going to let people hear.

MRR: Great. I mean, considering how hard it was to film gigs back then, it's amazing how many of your gigs were actually filmed. The Colonial Underground, the Outrage concert. There is just a lot of stuff out there. The CBC stuff that most of us have been able to find and it's really fortunate that that stuff is in good hands now. At the Shock Theatre there was a scuffle on stage and it ended up with you having Freddy Pompeii in a headlock. Was this the beginning of the end for the first line-up?

Steve: Probably (laughs). Fuck. When it gets to that point…

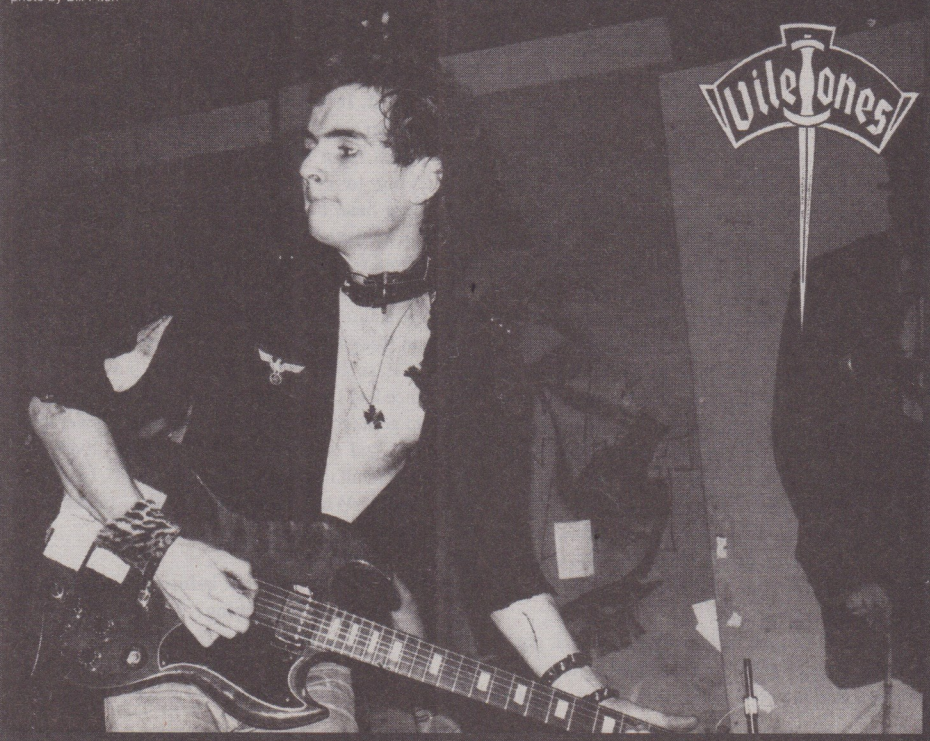
MRR: Motor, Freddy, and Chris formed the Secrets with Diodes' John Hamilton and you recruited Sam Ferrara and Tony Vincent from the Ugly. How did you convince those guys to join?

Steve: That was actually magic. There was no question about it. I didn't see it coming with the first break up. I was incredibly heartbroken and cried and the whole fucking thing, but at that point we were a five piece. And it went around the table. We had a manager at the time and he was going "So are you going to join the Secrets? Are you going to join the Viletones?" And Sam went "Nah, I'm sticking with Steve." And I felt like a million bucks and then a week later when Tony called because it was hard to get away from Mike Nightmare. This is a guy who would have a fucking gun, right? Like for real. And Tony called, I remember it like it was yesterday. And me and Sam were there and the voice said "Do you guys still need a drummer?" and it was Tony and we said "Yeah." And I thought, "Fuck," because if you are going to play with anyone, I mean, they were the best. I mean, Sam and Tony were—they looked immaculate, but in Manhattan when I would go down with Sam and Tony—Tony and I would go down to Little Italy and people would move out of the way when they saw Tony. I mean, he looked that cool.

MRR: Was there any friction between you and Nightmare after that?

Steve: Well, he didn't kill me. He was upset that he lost his band, but I suggested "Why don't you

photo by Bill Piton



get the Viletones, then?", which was Chris Hate and Freddy. I think Chris Hate and Freddy were pussies for doing that. I really do. It was too much. It freaked everyone out. Like, the fame in those days was so big. We were fucking Debbie Harry in the back of a Cadillac behind CBGBs. That's heavy stuff.

MRR: I would say. Tell us about the photo on the cover of the *Look Back in Anger* single.

Steve: Taken on the corner of Queen and Sherbourne. Me behind a guy who was having his struggles.

Cleave: Who was the photographer?

Steve: The photography was Eedie Steiner. It's an amazing shot actually.

MRR: It's an incredible shot. Did that guy know the picture was being taken?

Steve: I doubt it.

John: Did that guy get any money for that shot?

Steve: You know, we gave him a couple of bucks. Truth be known we did. But he was a little under the weather.

MRR: Rest in peace. He probably doesn't know how much his record is going for now. You guys played the Last Pogo but you weren't on the bill. Why weren't you on the bill and why did you end up playing?

Steve: Didn't want to do it. Heard that Colin Brunton was giving hand jobs so the Viletones said "Sounds alright." No. We weren't on the bill because—it's kind of a stupid thing. We should have just went. It was one of those stubborn stupid Viletones fucked up things. We should have just went "Yeah, we'll play" but we were being, you know. And then we heard that we couldn't headline. Teenage Head would so we said "Goddamn, if that's the case we are going to cause a godamn riot."

MRR: Which you definitely did.

Steve: And we brought the place down and that's why Teenage Head couldn't play. If people watch the movie they'll realize that. Teenage Head couldn't play because the Viletones created such pandemonium that it was impossible.

MRR: At the Last Pogo, you guys showed up with no equipment. Tell us about the gear you ended up using.

Steve: It was Teenage Head's gear (laughs).

MRR: I remember Sam had a hard time because Steve Mahon plays his bass upside down.

Steve: And the strings are all in the configuration of...

John: And the volume knobs are all on the wrong side.

Steve: All the set-ups are opposite and Sam, who was like an idiot savant, looks at the bass and kind of figures it out and then after a little while goes "Okay I get it. Everything is opposite, so …"

John: Sam is playing an upside down bass, basically. If you know the volume knobs are all on the wrong side of things and…

MRR: I thought he didn't even…that night he just seemed a bit confused by it. He looked really cool, but...

Kurt: And who played guitar that night and what happened to that guitar player?

Steve: You know, that's a cool question.

MRR: Who was that guy? You can have my job now.

Steve: Do you know who that guitar player was? Dig this. Cam from Brutus. Walter Zwol and Brutus.

Cleave: I know Cam but I didn't know he was in Brutus. I remember Brutus.

Steve: Great guitar player. Like a real in the pocket. I used to have to pay him to practice and all that shit. Okay, give the cat $20. It doesn't matter.

Kurt: $20, must be the '70s.

Steve: Well that's a good fee even now.

MRR: I saw you guys play with him at the Turning Point, upstairs. He played there.

John: The Learning Point.

MRR: I think we have all played in that place. In 1978 the Damned made their Toronto debut at the El Mocambo and I remember when you entered the venue, security went ballistic and they quite forcefully removed you. Why were you barred from the El Mo?

Steve: I don't know.

MRR: You never played there I don't think.

Steve: No.

MRR: They would never book you.

Steve: But do you know about that Damned show? They used Tony Vincent's drum kit. Rat Scabies ended up getting a hold of me when I lived with Eva on Isabella Street. So here's Rat Scabies. He's calling "Can I borrow your…" He was just really in a panic, right, and Tony goes "I don't know, is it right? We can't even get in there and we're giving this guy our drums." And I go "Oh fuck. It doesn't matter." And we went along with it. But yeah, they really had a hard on for me.

MRR: Yeah, you went near that place and…

Steve: I think it was because I threatened to bomb it when the Rolling Stones played (laughter) and they never forgave me.

MRR: Finally we find out after all these years. What inspired the Viletones into a rockabilly direction, a look and a sound that you unveiled at the Danforth Theatre with the Gang of Four and the Buzzcocks.

Steve: Longevity. I needed to find a vehicle that would make us last a little bit longer. Punk changed so dramatically after Sid Vicious died. Sid Vicious dying was to me like, "that was the end." That's it. No more fucking around. And if you're going to continue, you better either be a new wave band like Talking Heads or Blondie, but if you're going to be a band like the Viletones and transfer yourself, you better come up with something and I thought rockabilly would be a good thing. You know, it's funny, Sam always told me that I might of well have said Motown. Why didn't we become a Motown band?

MRR: You guys had the songs "Don't Mess With My Ducktail," "Rockin' Rockabilly," "Little Girl Linda." In 1997 you re-released

photo by Gail Blyth

your 1983 live album *Saturday Night, Sunday Morning* in expanded form with extra tracks on the CD, but also leaving certain tracks exclusive to the vinyl. Why did you do that?

Steve: Just to give something for the collectors. To make it exclusive. To make it something personal for the fans.

MRR: It's the old British philosophy of putting the unreleased B-side on it. I think it's really neat. In 2005 Carmen of CJ Sleez and the STDs had her autobiography *Poor Little Bitch Girl* published. In it she tells of you meeting Sid Vicious and Nancy Spungen. How did you end up meeting them?

Steve: Well, I'll tell you. I hated fucking Nancy with a passion. I knew Nancy Spungen and she made Courtney Love look like a choir girl. I mean, Nancy was way over the top but it looked very similar I thought. So I knew them. I fucking knew them alright. But you know what's funny? When you look back at history, and—I'll tell you this Greg, and you'll know this from your factual information—when Sid would do his gigs at Max's Kansas City, there'd only be fifteen people in the crowd. Like, towards the end …

MRR: They were all at Dancetria watching Liquid Liquid or something because a lot of that stuff was over.

Steve: Hello. Sid wasn't a real calling card, but now, because he's dead and all this time has gone by, people put a different thing on him, but in real time Sid Vicious was nothing. It wasn't a big deal. At all.

MRR: Yeah. Everybody loves you when you're dead. There seems to be renewed interest in the Toronto '77 punk scene with Colin Brunton producing an expanded DVD release of *The Last Pogo* and Rodney Bowes compiling a photo-documentary and Blair Martin's film project. What do you attribute this renewed interest to? It seems to be just exploding right now.

Steve: Yeah, there is a real good momentum with the Toronto punk scene and I think it is one of the most unexploited scenes and has the potential for being the most exciting. What Colin's doing? What Blair's doing? And the other cat?

John: I think it's self-explanatory. It's never really been thoroughly documented.

MRR: Yeah, it's always kind of upset me to see. Not to take anything away from the San Francisco scenes and the Washington scenes, whatever, but Toronto was so vital and so on the money and right there when it happened before so many other places and nothing has really gone down about it. Thank god for guys like Colin Brunton with the film stuff and Rodney Bowes and Blair who is working on this stuff. I hope this stuff sees the light of day. Rodney Bowes photos are beyond belief.

Steve: It will. And what Colin's doing with revisiting the Last Pogo and what the Toronto bands were doing back in '77 and '78 and then taking it till now. What Blair Martin is doing is sensational—fucking incredible. And Rodney Bowes photos, I'll tell you, there is a show at the moment at Art Metropole.

MRR: Yeah, Will Munro has put that together. Sorry I forgot to mention that, but that's just an incredible show. That's documenting all the archival things for the *File Magazine*, which is just incredible. What's your current take on pop culture and where do the Viletones fit in?

Steve: I'll tell you what I think. What went down in the *Toronto Star* today is that it's been ruled by eunuchs. There are a bunch of eunuchs in the harem. Here's all the gorgeous girls. Here's all the sex you want. Here's all the everything, but they're eunuchs. They don't know how to fucking do it, so this Billy Talent or whatever the fuck his name is and they all have the same posture and Alexisonfire and Sum 41—they are a bit slicker but that's because they've got money behind them. It ain't about fucking talent, it's about fucking money. And us cats have really seriously been around the block. Us four. When I say money I'm talking about $500,000 to make this video look good. Like they're not fucking around. This is the sweepstakes, right. But they are impotent. They don't have the fucking heart and whenever I am sitting across from Kurt I feel like I'm sitting across from someone in the MC5 or the Stooges.

Kurt: You are sitting across from me, so go for it. You're doing great. I am fucking fascinated.

MRR: In a '90s television ad for your boutique gallery Fleur de Monde you said the Viletones conducted yourselves more like a gang than a band and then described robbing a gas station outside of Ann Arbor, Michigan. When did this happen?

Steve: We did that actually several times.

MRR: I hope you guys know what you're in for when you go on tour.

Steve: We didn't rob them like at gunpoint. We just…

Kurt: It's okay, we're going to Japan, right?

Steve: But yeah, the Viletones did that several times. We would just load it up with gas and the guy would come—and it was typically a kid in the middle of Michigan—and say, "That's $20, sir."

MRR: It's an amazing commercial. It's too bad it never showed on TV. I'm not sure if it did. I have my own copy of it. There has been talk of a book for quite some time tentatively titled *A Taste of Honey*. When can we expect to see the completion of your book?

Steve: Six months before I die and I'm getting kind of close.

Kurt: So six months from now, then.

MRR: So the current version of the Viletones, you've got Cleave Anderson from the Way Outs and the Battered Wives…

Steve: And Blue Rodeo.

MRR: We've got Kurt Schefter from the Raving Mojos and should we mention the big star he played with?

Steve: Let's just say Kurt Shefter is…

John: …trying to live that down.

MRR: And John Bora was in an amazing band from the very early '80s called A Neon Rome. I was talking to John about a month ago and they just blew me away when they had a good night. And of course Steve Leckie. Will there be any future recordings and touring for the Viletones?

Steve: Yeah, definitely. I think that's job number one after we get this gig behind us. We want to record.

John: Yeah, record some songs, play some more shows. We are having a lot of fun doing this.

MRR: Great. Well, I know there is interest all over. There is definitely interest out there and in you guys from other countries.

Steve: And John Bora was also in Change of Heart and is generally regarded as the premier bass player in Toronto. I would say the country.

MRR: These guys can really play. It's just a natural vibe they've got going down. Anything you guys want to say before we sign off?

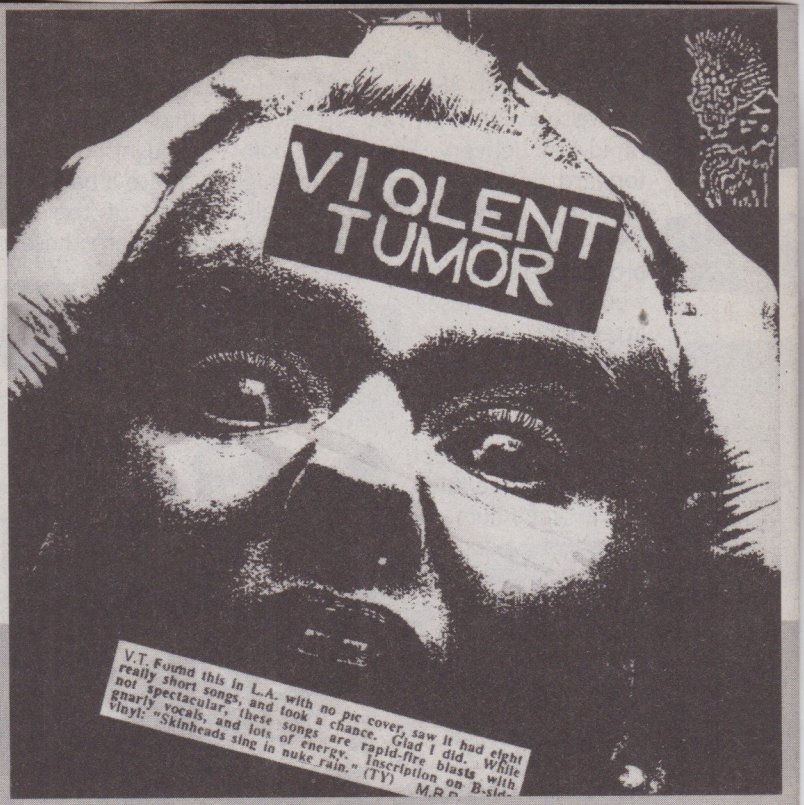
Kurt: God bless the Viletones.

John: Let's keep this music alive.

photo by Bill Piton

In the early '90s, I used to travel to Chicago every few months to go record shopping and hang out with my bro Martin, who at the time was one of the only people I knew who was amped on early '80s hardcore. I first discovered Violent Tumor by finding a copy of their 7" at Second Hand Tunes in Chicago for $1.99. Martin saw it in my hand and said "You should buy that" in the earnest tone of someone with inside information. Violent Tumor played raw, abrasive hardcore punk, and the 7" is a blast of fury from a time period that saw little of that style of music. Over the years I've turned up a few more copies of the 7" and traded them away to other collectors. The band itself has remained shrouded in mystery and even old Chicago folks I asked had never heard of them. Enter the 21st Century and the age of the internet—renewed interest in '80s hardcore lead to diehard collectors seeking the Violent Tumor 7". More and more people started looking for information about the band and came up empty-handed or with only the vaguest of rumors. Both Graham Booth and I were searching for info and finally made contact with ex-members and got the fascinating scoop on this obscure band. We put some questions together and Howard Kirby (guitar) summarized the answers in story form. So now twenty years after the fact the tale of Violent Tumor is told.

-Felix Havoc



THE VIOLENT TUMOR STORY

By Howard Kirby

In order to completely understand the strange story of Violent Tumor, it is important to know a little about my background. My uncle, who stood all of 5' 2", was a holy terror. His name was Billy but we called him "Uncle Bugsy." He was a true gangster. His negative influence on my Mom and the family made her vow that her three sons would never grow up in gang-infested neighborhoods. Her solution was to constantly move us to areas that were just beginning to change racially. As a result, I was consistently the prime target for almost unimaginable "racial hazing." I can recall coming home bruised and bloody many times. For a black person, Chicago was a dangerous place in those days, especially if you were an interloper. At 15, I had a plan of my own. I asked my mom for a cheap bass guitar figuring that she would insist that I "stay indoors" and learn how to play it. This, I thought, would limit my availability for those daily ass-kickings that were being administered at the hands of the neighborhood white boys. After a while, I found that I was rather good and the guys who were once kicking my ass were now asking me to play in their bands. I went from "nigger" to "Kirby the bass player" overnight. Naturally, we would play straight up rock and roll—Iron Butterfly, Sabbath, Alice Cooper, and stuff like that. When I look back on it now, I realize that it was probably the reason why there were no racial conflicts in the integrated bands that I played in later—I learned how to assimilate.

THE BAND

For many years in the late '70s and early '80s, the core members of what would become Violent Tumor—Mike "Skin" Carter, Arnold Keeter, and myself—got together and jammed. Arnold wasn't a musician but in the interest of having fun I taught him some bass licks, and after a while he could hold his own. Mike, the drummer, was a natural and could play anything; he and I had that rare vibe that allows you to know where the "breaks" and "accents" in a song are without so much as a glance. In the early years the band was called "Without Warning." We quipped that if we ever played a show, people would be shocked that we were black, hence the name "Without Warning." We had little or no interest in recording, playing out, or distributing our music. Our primary goal was to entertain our friends and create a kind of "electronic soapbox"—a way of expressing how we felt about social issues, current events, and our overall experiences in life. There was never a political agenda, although there seemed to be the general consensus between the three of us that we were against anything "military related." If there was any underlining theme to our music it was social in nature.

Arnold and I met at the local mall in Evergreen Park; we worked at competing record shops and were card-carrying metalheads. We had both experienced the racial hazing of our respective neighborhoods and were products of those environments. Mike and I had been friends for years. We were big fans of bands like The Scorpions, Priest, Thin Lizzy, Dio, and the like, and always felt as if we could do it better, or at least faster. During one of our jam sessions, a friend commented that we sounded like GBH. We had no fucking idea what he was talking about but our interest was piqued. He played a tape of their song "State Executioner" and we were

hooked. I was shocked and highly impressed with their raw energy and rapid-fire delivery. From that point forward, all of our songs were high intensity, balls-out blasts. We also soon learned that if you put a bit of profanity in the lyrics that people would pay closer attention to the message. The fact that we had little interest in the band "making it" kept any internal conflicts at a minimum—we were just having fun, but that was all to change.

howard in a bondage shop

Now that the door to the punk scene was opened, we started checking out local bands at the Metro and The Cubby Bear—bands like Rights of the Accused, The Effigies, Life Sentence, The Stitches, and probably the best and most overlooked hardcore band in Chicago, Out of Order. We always came to the gigs with at least five or six guys and made it known, through our "aggressive pit presence" and "kamikaze stage diving," that we were not to be trifled with. Once, at a Dead Kennedys show, a white power skinhead gang that called itself "Romantic Violence" wanted to test their luck but thought better of it after a van full of our drunken buddies pulled up. Mike also had the best pot on the planet and shared it freely with all of the punks at the shows—we never had any problems after that.

I started working at a small textile firm as a computer operator in 1983. There, I met Kurt Sarnau. He was a shy, quiet guy who, from all outward appearances, had few friends and even fewer social interactions. It took a while but we eventually became good friends. After some coaxing he opened up and began to show me some of his poems and lyrics. I found them thought provoking, although rather abstract. One of them was called "Running Machine." Kurt asked me if I could put some music to this one and of course, I said yes. He informed me that he had a friend that owned a recording studio. Truthfully, I wasn't that thrilled with the lyrics but I thought it would be a challenge to create a backing track. I have always been of the opinion that the best songs are those that if you listen to them without the lyrics, you would still be able to tell what the song was about, or at least get a vibe. A couple of good examples of this concept would be "Nausea" by X or "Madman" by DRI. With this in mind I set out to write music that sounded like you are in a hot rod or racing. Kurt agreed to allow us to record anything that we wanted as long as we did his tune.

After informing the rest of the band of our new project, they were excited. We decided to play one show to test the material. This show was done without Kurt. My cousin Asa Townsend (Screamin' T) did all of the vocals. To this day, I regret not keeping him as our permanent frontman—he killed. We opened for the Stitches at a roller rink in a suburb south of Chicago and we were able to tell by the audience's responses which songs to record and which to dump. In the interest of staying on the stage longer we had made the decision earlier to play the song "Abortion" twice back-to-back. I noticed that during the second time, the audience was singing the chorus with us:

ONE... SHE'S SUCKED UP
TWO... SHE'S TURNED OUT
THREE... SHE'S FUCKED UP...
CLINICAL ABORTION

mike, kurt and a fan

For the first time, I realized that they were listening... I mean really listening.

That was the only show that we played live as Violent Tumor.

From that point on things got complicated. I let Kurt know that the boys were on board and he instantly crowned himself "manager." Kurt seemed to bring a sense of urgency to the process that was a bit unsettling, but we plowed ahead and things began to take shape. With the exception of "Running Machine," I had written the lyrics for every song and Mike and I collaborated on all of the music. Arnold was just along for the ride. Kurt came up with the name Violent Tumor and began buying T-shirts, bumper stickers, and business cards even before he cleared it with us. The name didn't mean anything to me but since he had already "jumped the gun" on the swag, I let it go. Kurt also began buying gear, including a monster PA system. It would eventually become apparent that his goals for the band were completely different than mine. I naively thought that his generosity was all about the music but in actuality he was buying friendship and acceptance. We soon outgrew Mike's basement and started rehearsing at McCann's Nursery, a place owned by the parents of an old bass player buddy of mine named Darnell McCann. Darnell just watched at first, but later began playing bass on some of the songs that were too tricky for Arnold to handle.

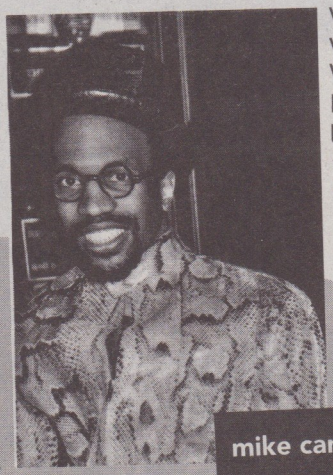
THE RECORD

Our first trip to Lake Recording Studio was a mind-warping experience. The engineer Bob Kader had never heard anything like the sound that we were putting down and was having trouble keeping up with us. He had huge sweat stains under each armpit and as a result, we nicknamed him "Sweaty Bob." He wasn't the only one having trouble

keeping up—Arnold had problems with many of the songs. Fortunately, Darnell was there to save the day and played bass on "Welcome Home," "Tool Box," and "Army Song." Arnold played bass on "Running Machine." Our second trip was even more "nut crushing" because Arnold didn't show and Darnell wasn't available, so I played bass and guitar on "Abortion," "Basket Case," "99 Floors," and "Problems."

Finally, all of the music tracks were done and we were looking forward to coming in one last time to do the vocals. By now we had a good feel for the process and had prepared well for laying down the vocals, so you can imagine my surprise when I found out that Kurt had already come into the studio without us and recorded vocal tracks on all of the songs. Needless to say, I was pissed. Though we ended up keeping Kurt's vocals on "Running Machine," we brought in a regular from the Metro, Tommy Newark, to do the rest of the vocals. However, his rather unemotional delivery just didn't work—that is, aside from his epic performance on "Welcome Home," which we ended up leaving in. At this point, I just wanted to get the whole thing over with so I decided to sing lead on all of the remaining tracks and we were done.

All tracks were now complete and it only took three visits to the studio—well, four if you count Kurt's backdoor recording session. It then became apparent to me what Kurt wanted all along—to be in the band. I felt betrayed and my loyalty to both the band and the recording project suffered.



mike carter

THE AFTERMATH

During this whole process, I had been dating a girl from California named Christina, and had taken another job at the Ford Motor Company. I was spent juggling a band, a relationship, and two jobs, and it showed. Two weeks after recording, Christina decided that she wanted to go home to LA and I was heartbroken. A week after that, I was fired from both of my jobs. Things weren't going well and since the recording session was over, there was little contact between the members in the band. I think for any band, a lull in activity after recording is dangerous, especially if the members aren't involved in the promotion and distribution of the final product. That to me was the manager's job; I felt that I had done enough. The next week I went outside on my way to the unemployment office and found that my car doors were completely frozen shut. "Fuck this," I decided, "I'm moving to California!" I suggested to Mike and Arnold that we all go; Mike refused and Arnold (again along for the ride) and I set out for the left coast.

mike and howard in hollywood

Kurt and Mike went back into the studio for the mixing process. They concocted "Tumor Head Records" (a fictitious label), had the EP pressed, and sent me a box of 50 records with plain white sleeves, which I split with Arnold. When I played the record, I was "crunchy" to say the least. The mix I thought was terrible, and credits were all wrong. I blamed them at first, but over time came to realize that I should have been there for everything myself. Later I found out that they felt abandoned and betrayed as if Arnold and I went off to Hollywood to start a new band—but in reality we had no jobs in Chicago and really just wanted a fresh start in life.

While in LA, Arnold and I would stand out on Melrose, Sunset, and Hollywood Boulevard and just hand out the 7" to anyone who looked like they would appreciate it. We also gave them out at hardcore shows in the area. I think that is how it came to the attention of Tim Yohannan at MRR. Naturally, after the review in the magazine, everybody jumped on board and Kurt created the cover (which I really liked). I have no idea who that is on the cover or where it came from. There are many aspects of this story that remain a mystery to me because so much was done while I was away. It's my guess that Kurt felt "used" after we left and he found himself without a band or friends. This is possibly why he has refused to participate in this interview.

I understand that we got some airplay from WNUR in Chicago and that boosted our popularity with the locals. In the years that followed, Mike and Kurt came out to visit Arnold and me a few times in Hollywood where we used a 4-track to record what I considered to be some of our best work. They also brought HR from the Bad Brains, who helped guide us with some of our newer tunes.

In California, the only band that I contemplated joining was one called Famous Tea. I got a tape of their song "No Go" from a friend of the lead singer and I gave him a 7". He liked it and asked me if I wanted to play guitar for them. Remembering the bullshit that I had endured with the VT, I declined, although I really liked them.

Today, I live back in Chicago right down the street from Mike. We are still the best of friends and are in the process of writing material for our new band DV8, featuring a new female lead singer known as Baby Comatose. Darnell will play bass. If asked if I am surprised that there's interest in Violent Tumor, my answer is no—I'm not surprised, I'm fucking shocked. But more than that, I'm saddened that we weren't all on the same page back then, and didn't realize at the time that there was much more to being a successful band that just being able to play. I think we missed a golden opportunity.

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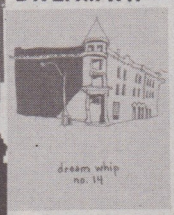

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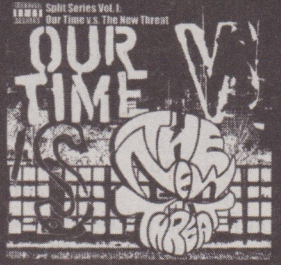

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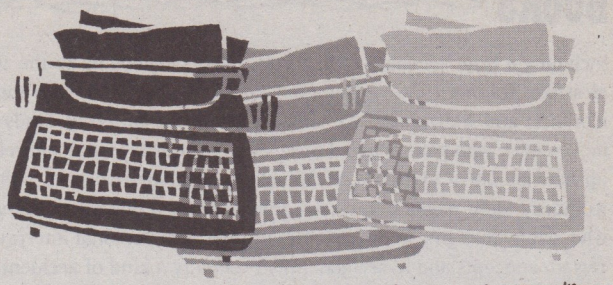

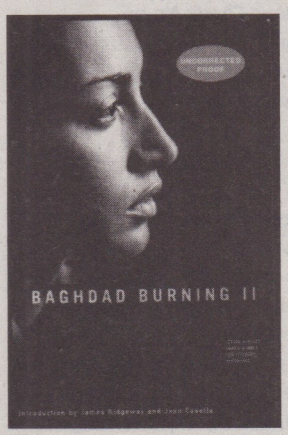

Baghdad Burning II: More Girl Blog From Iraq
Riverbend, introduction by James Ridgeway and Jean Casella
190 pgs • $14.95
The Feminist Press at CUNY
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Let's face it. It's really easy for many Americans to be rather ignorant about what's going on in Iraq. Not because we don't care—we may read about it and listen to the news regularly, but the war doesn't really effect us. Bombs aren't dropping regularly over our cities, and we don't have to stay home from school or work because things are too unstable. It's easy for us to be ignorant about the war because we're not in the midst of it.

Riverbend is. She's an Iraqi and a former computer programmer who was just 24 when she started her "girl blog," Baghdad Burning (riverbendblog.blogspot.com). Her blog, of which this book is the second installment in printed form, is actually not heavy on boring politics or full of details that your average person wouldn't understand. Riverbend writes simply and clearly about what daily life is like in Iraq for normal people, like her and her family, since the war began. Yes, she is very knowledgeable about current events in both Iraq and the US, but deals with them in a darkly funny and easy to understand way.

The book really hits home and is very effective in making its points because it lets you actually get to know an Iraqi citizen. It's not like one of those dry, distant news reports you hear on the radio every day, "such-and-such number of Iraqis were killed today in such-and-such area." Instead, you get to know Riverbend and her family as individuals and see the events from their perspective, making the events much more detailed and much more real, rather than just numbers. You're reminded that Iraqis are real people and they're really not too different from us. Hey, Riverbend seems to know more about American TV shows than I do!

Riverbend, who keeps her real name secret for reasons of personal safety, is an eloquent writer. She tells stories of day-to-day life, complete with dialogue, interspersed with her commentary and views on the elections, political speeches, the US media that Iraq is being bombarded with, and more. It was very interesting and enlightening for me to read about her waiting in line all night to fill her gas tank, the shortage of water and electricity, and getting harassed on the street for not being dressed "appropriately" according to the ever-changing female standards. She is an outspoken critic of the American occupation and thinks things were better before the US got involved. She is an excellent spokesperson for the common person in Iraq and what's really happening there, and she deservedly won the Lettre Ulysses Award for Literary Reportage.

The book also features an introduction with some background on Riverbend and her blog, and brief summary sections on the Iraq war during the time covered by the book (October, 2004 to March, 2006). An excellent book if you've been beating yourself up for not knowing enough about this war, or if you just want a different perspective. The book also wakes you up and makes you realize this could happen anywhere.

—Jane Ghotlos

Horizontalism: Voices of Popular Power in Argentina
Marina Sitrin, Editor
256 pages $18.95
AK Press
674A 23rd Street
Oakland, CA 94612

In December 2001, the government of Argentina froze its citizens' bank accounts, forbidding access to the funds while the money was used to attract foreign investors. After a decade of increased privatization in an effort to pay off government loans from the International Monetary Fund (whose shady practices I probably don't have to sell you on, dear reader), this event proved to be the spark that started the proverbial prairie fire: millions demonstrated against the government's actions in a massive and, rather importantly, mostly spontaneous popular rebellion. Protesters came from diverse backgrounds, and demonstrations included the impoverished, the working classes, and the newly destitute middle class, creating the conditions for a new spirit of solidarity that toppled five different governments before the end of the year.

These events, by turns baffling and inspiring, could incite volumes of analysis on their own, but Marina Sitrin, editor of *Horizontalism: Voices of Popular Power in Argentina*, is more concerned with what came next. With the momentum of the December 2001 uprising, new social arrangements began to form in Argentina to combat state-facilitated poverty. People began to organize in neighborhood assemblies, enacting local policy through consensus-based decision-making; workers occupied their factories, ultimately taking over their operations and establishing alliances with other "recuperated workplaces;" and ultimately, new approaches to politics began to take shape. These developments centered on the practices of *horizontalidad* and *autogestión*; rather than viewing these concepts as part of a political program in the anarchist or Marxist sense, one would do better to understand them as they function in their practical application. While the words maintain some affinity to familiar Leftist ideas, their specificity remains vital to their interpretation. *Horizontalidad* essentially refers to anti-hierarchical decision-making and solidarity, while *autogestión* signifies the need to do work for oneself in a directly democratic way, outside of the traditional political channels of parties and state governments. Again, these terms do not form the foundation of a new party politics, and are not the talking points of a traditional revolutionary movement; instead, they describe (rather than prescribe) the actions of individuals as they found new ways to work together and attack problems the Argentinean government had no interest in solving. In other words, the practice gave rise to the theory, not the other way around.

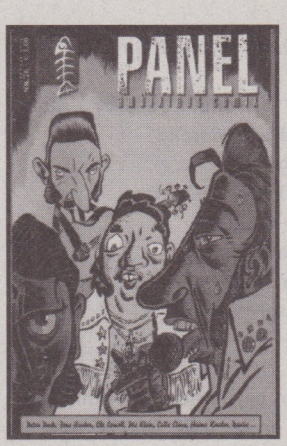
Sitrin's book consists of a short introduction and contextual analysis,

including a brief summary of historical events leading up to the 2001 general strike, followed by two hundred pages of interviews with the activists, workers, and individuals affiliated with various different kinds of micro-movements, who have enacted these new social praxes and labored to develop new modes of existence. From bakers to factory workers, LGBT activists to independent media organizers, Sitrin weaves a diverse tapestry of voices who, while diverging in the specifics of their own personal interpretations of certain concepts and ideas, generally exemplify a kind of accidental unity of vision, in which the vocabulary for social change, through shared experience, has become intelligible from one corner of society to another. Beyond these commonalities, it is the enthusiasm and optimism of each interviewee that really sticks with the reader. Nearly every person proclaims how much happier their lives have been since taking part in these new anti-hierarchical practices. While I would caution against any sort of uncomplicated idealization of these events, it's impossible, if you're of the *MRR*-reading persuasion, not to be affected by these stories, and hopefully it can inspire us to facilitate this kind of thinking in our own lives.

If the book has one major fault, it is that we don't really get a sense of Sitrin's voice in the proceedings. While she takes pains in the introduction to remind the reader of her own hand in shaping the interview texts and arranging the words, she omits her own questions from the interviews themselves, letting passages stand as if they emerged organically from the subjects' mouths. Especially given the collective nature of the projects described, I personally would have preferred to see more clearly Sitrin's role in the collective process through which the texts were constructed. Perhaps this might have even pushed for the inclusion of other questions I found myself asking, questions that do not get addressed in *Horizontalism*: for instance, while numerous references are made to the Zapatistas, how do the participants see themselves in relation to other Leftist movements in Latin America and around the world? How can these kinds of collectivities evolve and proliferate?

Alas, no book can answer every question, and these inquiries must be saved for another work. Ultimately, this book stands out in the current body of literature on Latin American social movements, so much so that despite my criticisms I can still give it my highest recommendation, in that it reminds us of something that often goes unnoticed: people, as I have long suspected, don't need the inflated celebrity of a Chávez or a Castro to inspire them to dream of and build a new, more equitable society. Given the right conditions, the people can do it for themselves, and I for one would trade a hundred self-congratulatory Hugo Chávez biographies for another book like this.

—Maxwell Tremblay



Panel Ambixious Comix Nr. 26
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www.edition-panel.com

Panel is a regularly published anthology of German-language comic strips. The collection includes works by renowned artists such as Peter Puck of Rudi fame and Danish illustrator Ole Comoll, who is featured on the cover. It is printed on glossy paper and lacks a DIY aesthetic, but the artwork is of high quality and the storylines range from the absurd and political to the funny and inane. One comic I particularly enjoyed was one by Comoll, which stars a lonely man, a party of Elvis Presleys, and a bar full of Humphrey Bogarts. If you don't read German I wouldn't recommend it since there are only about three comics without words. However, if you are fluent in the language and enjoy the comic medium, then I'd say pick it up.

—Damian Harris

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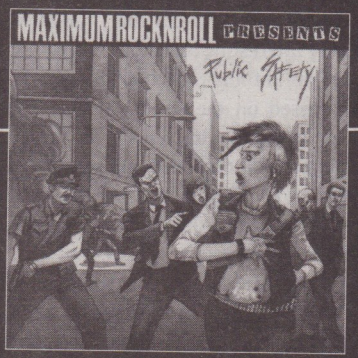

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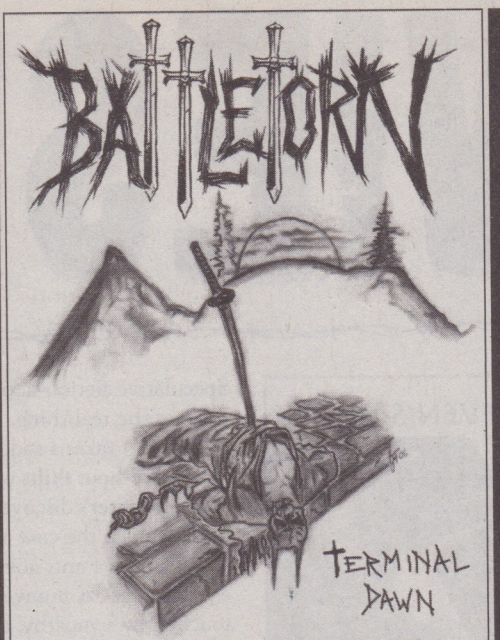

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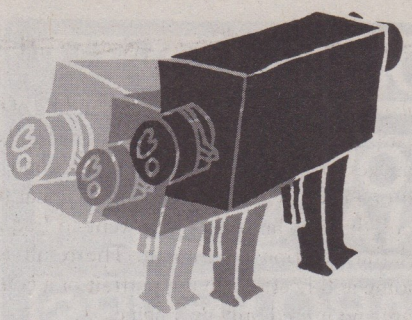


FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI

OSCAR SPOILS

The end of World War II sparked the beginning of the Cold War, and the "Red Threat"—epitomized by the Iron Curtain—had its grimmest real-world manifestation in the republic of East Germany. **The Lives of Others**, winner of the foreign film Oscar in 2006, presents a version of East Berlin that sometimes seems a more accurate representation of George Orwell's **1984**.

Fittingly, the film opens in the year 1984. Shadowing the example of Stalinism, the entire culture is dominated by the shadow of the Stasi, West Germany's well-funded secret police. (Its ranks of members and collaborators number over quarter of a million.) Georg Dreyman (Sebastian Koch) is a playwright whose work is not only tolerated, but also respected by the elite; more often then not, they would be blacklisted. As a result, he enjoys an unusual material comfort and privacy; it would be politically dangerous to subject him to the surveillance given to other artists.

But the machinery of the GDR isn't immune to corruption. Several elite can't accept the idea that an author with so many suspect connections could be "clean." So, after one of Dreyman's sold-out plays, Lt. Colonel Grubitz (Ulrich Tukur), uber-mensch of the cultural department, conspires to surveil the author. Within the week, a team steals into Dreyman's apartment and covers it with a swarm of bugging devices—all of them linked to a van parked unobtrusively outside.

Grubitz, head of Stasi cultural affairs, disdains the easy life the writer enjoys, but Dreyman is second to none in his prestige. As an obvious target, it would be a plum for the Stasi if they manage to nab him as a secret enemy of the state. There's also the unofficial secret that Grubitz is having an affair with the writer's unwilling girlfriend. She just happens to be an actress, and he can instantly leave her without a job.

Who else to man the day-to-day operations than Capt. Gern Wiesler (Ulrich Muhe)? With graying hair and a face completely devoid of smile muscles, he's unquestionably one of Stasi's most loyal and capable officers. He claims he can identify any dissident at a few paces; he's timed how long it takes to break a suspect to within minutes. Dreyman is a special challenge. How long can the author maintain his reputation despite the most aggressive efforts of the secret police to bring him down?

The Lives of Others plays like an Iron Curtain variant of **The Conversation**—and you couldn't ask for a more distinguished comparison. If anything, **The Lives of Others** is even more penetrating. Written and directed by Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck, the film strikes the right balance between psychological thriller and human drama. Speculative fiction about a fictional 1984 can't strike the same note of truth as the real thing.

The plot takes a sudden twist when the narrow-minded Wiesler, sharing twelve-hour shifts with a less dedicated cohort, perversely stage-manages the writer's discovery of his girlfriend's affair with Grubitz. He hopes to blow open the case and use any potential discord between the couple as evidence of anti-government treachery. For Captain Weisler, however, it begins to unravel. For the first time, the intelligence officer is touched by sympathy, and he begins to realize he may be signed up on the wrong side.

When the Academy Awards were announced this spring, many were surprised that widely publicized **Pan's Labyrinth** lost the foreign film Oscar to the relatively less known German entry. Most handicappers were very surprised.

Pan's Labyrinth is certainly flashier. Set in the final years of Second World War, its story is as much fantasy as reality, and its horrors are worse than any blacklist.

Director Guillermo Del Toro is no lightweight when it comes to international feature films. His bent for twisted fantasy was used to success in the commercial films **Hellboy** and **Blade II**, but even the earlier **Chronos** has a feel for visual style that puts him in a special class. **Pan's Labyrinth** is less overtly commercial than his other recent work.

It's 1944, and Franco's armies are advancing across Spain, spearheaded by the likes of cold-hearted Vidal (Sergi Lopez), whose small Nazi command lends him absolute power. With his pregnant wife Carmen (Ariade Gil) and young daughter Ofelia (Ivana Manquero) in tow, the officer makes his way through the deep woods in pursuit of insurgents. The intense drama sparks Ofelia's imagination. Never too far from her book of fairly tales, Ofelia retreats into a fairy world that would make *A Midsummer Night's Dream* seem relatively horrific. In solo expeditions through the forest, she is initiated into fairy world by Pan (Doug Jones), who devises a series of trials to test her eligibility as princess.

It's not surprising that this fantasyland is considerably more attractive than the real life world her mother accepts as reality. Pan has coiled horns and an insidious expression, but he's Ofelia's only ticket out of the Nazi-occupied world with mounting fear and violence.

The fantasy segments are so riveting that it's sometimes a letdown when the film returns to reality. Of course, sometimes this works with the reverse effect; it's not easy to believe that Ofelia could be that overcome by such vivid images unless she were a bit mentally unhinged. Director Del Toro is so insistent on his concept that, despite the astonishing visual design of the film, it's sometimes less than completely credible.

The story gains an added intensity with the Nazis' redoubled efforts to root out insurgents. The insurgency operates in a nearly invisible world hidden by forest; in the same way, Ofelia tries to retrieve hope from her own concealed world.

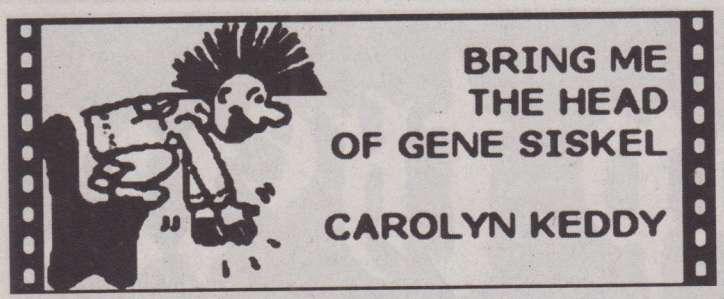
But that's a subtle cinematic argument, and you may watch **Pan's Labyrinth** and ask, "What's the point?" This isn't *A Midsummer Night's Dream* where the fantasy and real world turn out to be same. There's little reason for fantasy even being in the film (aside from justifying the lush visuals). Director Del Toro doesn't tie it all together as well as he might have; the film loses dramatic weight, and ends up seeming more like a quaint novelty.

Maybe the most impressive and demanding of the nominees didn't win the award. **Iraq in Fragments** is an astonishing documentary that actually manages to bypass much of the politics and come up with a realistic portrait of a country in strife. In a project that took nearly four years to complete, director James Longley went to Iraq armed with digi-cam to unravel the situation for himself. The result is **Iraq in Fragments,** a demanding and heartfelt living portrait of a country divided by religion and clan, and united only by a name.

Another of the film's achievements is more technical. James Longley and his team have somehow managed to make a video movie achieve the visual breadth of a feature film. With a feel for reality that could never be emulated, **Iraq in Fragments** has the disjointed, inconstant pace of daily life. We never hear from women because their word has little weight. Children—including several who now care for their entire family—at first welcomed liberation. Now, they just want the US to take its oil and go away.

The film is divided into three parts. Longley systematically visits the Kurds, Sunnis, and Shiites and discovers deep rifts that can't easily be bridged. Saddam Hussein held the country together by terror and brute force; but now, the loudest voices and most radical views seem to have taken control.

It's only in the film's final moments that we get a short glimpse of what Iraq could someday be like. The Kurds in the north live a farming life that's hard, but at least comparatively peaceful, and many have begun to fall into the rhythms that have existed here for generations. A boy says that Iraq must always be united; a withered man sighs that the only future for Iraq lies is to divide it into separate regions. Longley suggests that even the most basic things involve conflict, and few have provided a more honest or convincing portrait of a conflict that won't seem to end.



REVOLUTION GRRRL STYLE NOW

I suddenly became one of *those* people. I am trying to make it to work on time and after fruitlessly looking at the new release shelf where I was told it would be, I go up to the guy at the video store counter. "Do you have a documentary about Riot Grrrls?" Yeah, they did, but someone misfiled it on the documentary shelf instead of with the new releases. So I wasn't really *that* lame. Though knowing the title would have helped.

Don't Need You: The Herstory of Riot Grrrl is that documentary. It is amazingly short which makes me happy since most documentaries want to drag themselves out to feature length when it is not necessary. Short with a punch makes more sense, especially considering the short existence of the core riot grrrl movement.

Riot Grrrl as a movement started in the early '90s with a fanzine and an exchange of ideas on what it meant to be a woman in a male punk's world. This evolved into the start of bands that embraced their femininity and were not afraid to stand up to the knucklehead boys in the pit. Of course, this was going to get popular. You always see lots of girl at punk shows. Then the masses caught on.

Don't Need You interviews the key players in the movement—Kathleen Hanna, Allison Wolfe, Corin Tucker, Sharon Cheslow. An otherwise inspiring documentary, it begins to get annoying with the seemingly universal complaint that the mainstream press didn't get it and misrepresented the ideas and the bands involved. While this may be a legitimate complaint, why are they still letting it get to them so much? It may have been a sore spot amongst the various factions. People accused Bikini Kill of becoming the stars when they weren't talking to the music magazines, but they wrote about the band anyway.

Given the topic, **Don't Need You** should have tried to not have any boys in the documentary. There was no interview with Bikini Kill's Billy Karren. Why was there an interview with Ian MacKaye? The inclusion of MacKaye and "DC punk historian" Mark Andersen seems to be there only to legitimize the subject, yet wasn't not needing male approval what it was all about anyway? (www.urbancowgirlproductions.com/dont/)

So how do you deal with fame? Do you shun the media and let them write about you anyway? Or do you put all your dirty laundry out there where everyone can see it, knowing that at least that you told your side of the story? **You're Gonna Miss Me** is the story of Roky Erickson. It is not afraid to show it all: the eccentricities, the family weirdness, and the lawsuits. It makes me wonder if I really need to know all of this personal stuff. That didn't stop me from watching though.

In the '60s Roky Erickson was the lead singer of the 13th Floor Elevators. The band had become successful in the psychedelic music scene, especially popular in San Francisco. Erickson is reputedly the main influence on Janis Joplin. In 1969 he was busted for possession of marijuana. Unfortunately, this was in Texas. He pleaded insanity and was sent off to a mental institution. He received shock treatments that left him really messed up. When he was released from the hospital three years later, he started to play music again. His music took on more haunting subjects such as zombies, the devil, and aliens. Then he sort of disappeared from the music scene.

You're Gonna Miss Me mostly focuses on the more personal aspects of Roky's life. He was living as a recluse, collecting junk mail and listening to lots of white noise. The only person he was speaking to was his mother, who was eccentric in her own right. Erickson's youngest brother Sumner sues to get custody of his brother. He wins, moves Roky to his house in Pittsburgh and begins to encourage Roky to get back into music.

There are a lot of awkward scenes in **You're Gonna Miss Me**. I can't imagine I'd want all of that personal shit about my family out there for the world to look at. Fortunately, director Keven McAlester shows everyone's oddities. Roky and his mother may have the most obvious, but when McAlester slow pans across a quiet Pittsburgh street, showing all the old houses and finally stopping on Sumner's gaudy, brightly colored loft building that looks horribly out of place in the neighborhood, you realize he has some insecurities too.

The saddest part was the end of the film when Sumner and Roky are going back to Austin, TX. "What's the first thing you want to do when you get back to Austin?" Sumner asks Roky. "I want to see Mom", Roky replies.

I got to see Roky Erickson perform the day after the screening. I have to tell you, it was pretty amazing. He sounds exactly the same. His voice is still as great as ever. He seemed a bit shy and didn't interact with the audience too much. But when he sang and played it was pretty great. (youregonnamissme.com)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area, let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it.

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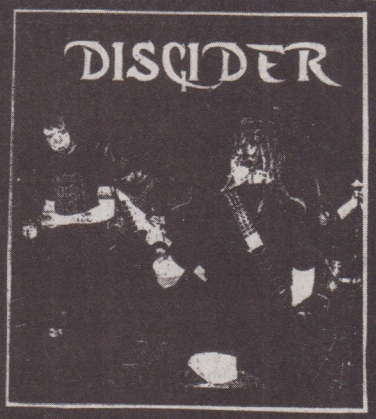

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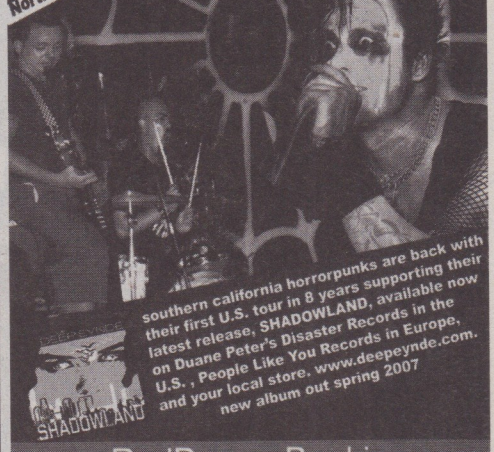

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999 – "Nasty Tales" CD

I'm not sure why anyone would put out a live CD these days when live DVDs are coming out left and right. This 2005 recording is OK. 999 has never done much for me outside of the few classic hits that are on this, and I am pretty big on the UK punk. If they have a live DVD, hunt that down instead, as this CD is probably best for 999 completists only. This features the original line-up except for the bass player, for your info. (RL)
(Secret, www.secretrecordslimited.com)

ABSURD – "Blodig Stad" EP

Hell yeah, this is a much needed and well-done boot (earning the title "fanclub reissue") of this totally amazing and mandatory record from the early Swedish scene. Unlike the other classics of early Swedish hardcore (ANTI-CIMEX, S.O.D., CRUDE SS etc.), ABSURD was a lot more wildly punk and not at all proto-crust/D-beat—they are total head-explosion, falling-apart hardcore with the most awesome screamed vocals. There are five songs altogether, my favorite of which is the mid-tempo stomper "Bojkotta Coca Cola," though maybe I like that best because the other songs are such primitive HC/punk anthems. I've had these songs on a dubbed cassette tape for a few years that I've worn nearly clean through, and since I am never gonna go the weekend warrior desk job route that would afford me the opportunity to pony up the $400+ for the OG, I am happy to have a vinyl reissue available. What can I say? This is total perfection. I hear this reissue is limited to 500, which is a shame 'cause no punker should go without it. (GN)
(bootleg, no address)

A HAPPY DEATH – "Letter to the Dead" CD

Four songs of poppy, goth-tinged punk. With the exception of the second song—a poem recited over what sounds like an improvised jam—this is all pretty upbeat stuff, in stark contrast to the morose lyrics. I discovered that the band started as a result of the untimely death of the singer's fiancée, which might have contributed somewhat to the dark subject matter for the songs. What is it about the sunshine of Southern California that produces all these bands with gothic tendencies? (AM)
(Me and My Shadow, PO Box 673, Long Beach, CA 90801, www.ahappydeath.com)

AKIMBO – "Harshing Your Mellow" CD

This is a re-mastered reissue of the band's debut on Amalgamate, with new artwork and a SCREAMERS cover that did not appear on the original. You probably already know if you like this band. I, however, can't stand them. Their whole rockin'-hardcore-with-spastic-emo-parts thing just comes out sounding like LED ZEPPELIN mixed with AT THE DRIVE IN. Come see them open up for a big name alternative rock band at venue near you. (BN)
(Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141, www.alternativetentacles.com)

AMERICAN CHEESEBURGER – "Classic Mantra" EP

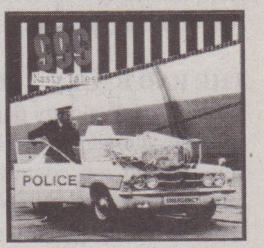
Before I put the needle down on this one I was pretty excited to check this band out, having heard good things and seeing that they had a procured a much-coveted spot at the upcoming Chaos in Tejas fest. These tunes, however, are not so exciting: simple fastcore with screamed vocals. The fuzzy guitar tone is kind of neat, and it's cool for people to hold down 2001, but nothing on here grabs me. Seven songs of goofiness, flannel, thrash, and poor hygiene from Atlanta. (BN)
(Tsunami, 231 Emery Mills Rd, Shapliegh, ME 04076, www.tsuthrash.com)

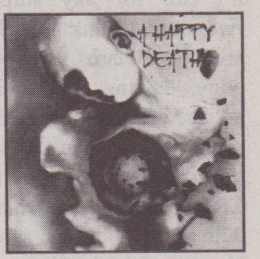
ANTI-NOWHERE LEAGUE – "Secret Radio Recordings" CD

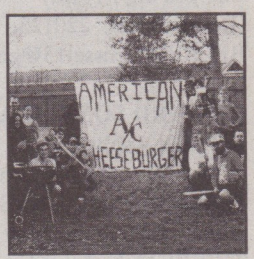
Last time I checked, the year was 2007. So why am I reviewing a live CD by a band that has not written a decent song in over two decades? Well the answer is because here at *MRR* we review almost everything punk. That being said, in 2007 you should go buy something from FUCKED UP, JAY REATARD, GORILLA ANGREB, REIGNING SOUNDS, TRANZMITORS, TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKET, or countless others besides this piece of crap. Fuck nostalgia rock. (JF)
(Dream Catcher, www.dreamcatcher-records.com)

THE ASSASSINATORS – "Torste Dag I Resten Af Mit Liv" EP

I am rarely surprised by the records I'm assigned to review. If it looks like a grind record, nine out of ten times







it's a fucking grind record. But this little record sent my head to spinning. The cover is a punk army, lead by a crust warrior goddess, and what do they sound like? The fucking GOGO'S! Danish, DIY, political, lady-fronted punk that sounds like JOYCE MCKINNEY EXPERIENCE, LA FRACTION, and THE GOGO'S! This is my fucking jam right here. (AA)
(Alerta Antifascista, c/o Timo Nehmtow, Postfach 2318, 24913 Flensburg, GERMANY, www.no-pasaran.org)

BAD BACKS – "Tombstone Town" EP

Sloppy DIY punk that's upbeat and melodic. Catchy choruses and funny lyrics such as, "You're a bad roommate/I'm a bad roommate/Let's get drunk tonight." Fun scrappy stuff, limited to 300. (AD)
(www.thebadbacks.net)

THE BAD BACKS – CD

Some kinda sloppy punky rock 'n' roll with a little psych-garage feel here. A little underdeveloped and too controlled to rock me, this reminds me of NEW SALEM WITCH HUNTERS outside of the couple punk ditties. (RL)
(Dirty River)

BAGNA / I KNOW – split CD

First, a comment about the packaging—this is one of the nicest DIY digipack I've seen, and instead of a digitray it uses a short piece of fuel line, glued upright, to the inside of the cardstock cover; the CD fits super-snug, and doesn't call for any stupid proprietary tray. Awesome. I think both BAGNA and I KNOW are from Belarus. BAGNA plays quick-paced, edgy, driving punk with graveled throaty vocals, and bitter, resilient lyrics. I KNOW's sound is a bit more catchy and modern, but at times it has a cool rigidity that reminds me of CRASS and other UK anarchist punk bands, with more sung than screamed female vocals. Can you dig it? (BS)
(Rebel Scene, 220123, PO Box 33, Minsk, BELARUS, russel13@gmail.com)

BASTARD SONS OF APOCALYPSE / SIN ORDEN – split EP

Both of these bands have two EPs of their own (though Chicago's SIN ORDEN has been around for significantly longer than Austin, TX's BSA), and they've paired up here on an EP called *Razacore*. BSA continues with their straightforward Scandi-beat HC, which isn't as good as TOTALITÄR, but is totally better than almost every other CIMEX tribute act out there. Something about them—maybe their energy?—elevates them out of generi-core territory. SIN ORDEN's first EP is one of the best hardcore records of the early '00s, and you should do everything in your power to find that 7". The songs on this EP aren't as on fire as that first record, but are as good as the more recent 7", and like that one they blaze through their side at thrash speed. I like it best when they slow down just a hair, which they do on a couple of these songs. The art is cool, the lyrics are good (BSA sings in English, SIN ORDEN in Spanish), and the overall effect of the record is powerful. Two complementary and evenly matched bands make for that rarest of items, the split 7" that is good all the way through. (GN)
(Desobediencia, c/o Manuel Ramirez, PO Box 15438, Austin, TX 78715, desobediencia2000@yahoo.com)

THE BECAUSE / ONE REASON – split EP

The first song from Japan's BECAUSE is a chaotic and melodic tune featuring cool female vox that sound like a teenaged MUFFS. The other song has male vox and is a little more screamo than the first. Both songs have driving riffs and sound like early JAWBREAKER meets modern DIY pop-core, but kinda muddled in a way that's typical of Snuffy Smiles bands. Mississippi's venerable ONE REASON occupies the flipside of this disc. Ginger's expressive vocals and the rhythm section's honest punk core (no, not Punk Core. I mean a core that is punk, okay?) add up to a sound that is hard to pigeonhole. It would be true, but probably unfair, to describe them as folk-based emo-punk. Here they give us one ERIN TOBEY cover, and one song that sounds like a traditional folk ballad, but is an original. Another good one from Snuffy Smiles, this time co-released with Salinas, an American label. (PC)
(Salinas, PO Box 20996, Ferndale, MI 48220)

THE BEST BAND IN THE WORLD – "Ma Bjoda Per Lan" CD

Brave assumption in the band name, and a little off mark I must say. By no means bad, this Icelandic band (don't get to say that very often) delivers some CHARLES BRONSON-esque spastic thrash, but with some weird super slow twiddle breakdowns. The songs just never seem to hit a groove; as a soon as you start rocking the fucking thing changes tempo. To top it off, the packaging is sub-demo quality with just a hand-drawn photocopy as the cover. I want to like them because they are from Iceland, but I just don't. (TB)
(Banana Thrash)

BOMBEREGN – "No Fucking End" EP

Fuck! BOMBEREGN's ripping new EP out on Kick n' Punch Records is a force to be reckoned with! Side A starts with "No Fucking End," which includs the lyrics "Bastards of war, marching on / No fucking end in sight." All five songs on this EP embrace the same bleak thoughts. "Marched to Death," "Like Sheep They March," "Waiting for War," "Blood Runs Red In Trench Dug Deep," "No Tomorrow." "What future, what hope in the hands of these madmen?" "How Much Longer?": "Their flag flies proud yet at half-mast—another war dead…" BOMBEREGN are quite clear on their feelings about war. Three out of five songs on this EP start out with a sustained STOOGES-type guitar introduction and promptly lurch into brute force hardcore. The gruff shouted vocals are extremely effective with the consistent chug of the guitar. This punk rock music builds momentum in each song with extreme urgency lurking right beneath the surface! This *No Fucking End* EP by BOMBEREGN, the "biker war punx," has heartfelt, fully committed lyrical content, coupled with raw, unbridled punk rock venom! Recommended! (BR)
(Kick n' Punch, www.kicknpunch.com)

BRAINWORMS – "Which Is Worse" LP

Some people believe hardcore can be interesting. It doesn't have to have anything to do with Metal or faux posi bullshit. It can harken back to old bands and yet still push forward. I'm one of the people who believe these things. So are BRAINWORMS. Rarely are these things we believe realized so fully and completely in such a short amount of time. *Which Is Worse* is a compilation, if you will, of their demo and some live stuff on the other side. I usually hate live shit but it's actually recorded really well…pretty comparable to their demo actually. If you skip the between-song banter you'd never really know it was live. Their only fault is their name. It just reminds me of that scene in *Wrath of Khan* and I don't appreciate this. I do however approve of this record and their get rad philosophy. P.S.: Features people from MUNICIPAL WASTE, STOP IT!, ULTRA DOLPHINS and a bunch of other bands. They say they sort of sound like RITES OF SPRING. Every now and again I agree with this statement. (ST)
(Rorschach, www.rorschachrecords.net)

BRIGHT WHITE NOISE – "Nevermind the Haircuts" CD

Super-melodic new school hardcore, full of clean power chords, squint-eyed cries of anguish, and harmonic-yet-screamed back-up vocals. The tunes on this six-song EP are pretty tight, considering the band had only been together for a few months before recording. Yet I've been sitting here for a half hour listening to this and trying to think of some good things to say. This release is totally DIY, the lyrics and musicianship are pretty good, and these guys

display an obvious passion for what they do. So what's the problem? It's just that I can't really get into metallic, AFI-inspired new school hardcore. I know everyone has their definitions, but I don't think typical *MRR* readers would dig this. (BG)
(Bound by the Black Rag, PO Box 1417, Ukiah, CA 95482, www.blackragrecords.com)

BRIMSTONE HOWL – "Uptight/The Gates 2"

.....what the fuck is happening here??????? Is there a new lo-fi garage punk revival thing going on right now that I ain't hip to or something.....??????? Every month these little turds get dropped my way for review and I'm starting to wonder what's going on!!!!!! Is old Dave Crider going to start doing "Garage Shock" again to exploit this new crop of Johnny-cum-lately Silvertone-toters?????? I guess the HIVES were just a little too clean for you all.....!!!!!!!!! Finally got bored of their lame ass shit, eh????? Well it's about motherfucking time you fucking idiots.....!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! The other side of the fence is much better.....much dirtier.....!!!!!! .....most of these new lo-fi Garage records suck, but every now and then you get a real good catchy one like this that will cause your rectum to prolapse!!!!!!!!!! I have no idea where these boys are from but they sure as hell came up with quite a stomper.....especially the "A" side called "Uptight".....it makes me wanna get my pecker "up" inside a "tight" butthole....!!!!! Like I said folks, it's dirtier on "this" side of the fence.....and that's the way I like it.....hopefully you do too!!!!!!!!!(SW)
(Shake Your Ass/www.syarecords.it)

BRUTAL KNIGHTS – "Feast Of Shame" LP

Numbskull rock for numbskulls…just how I like it. Sounds like these clowns don't have a braincell to rub between them—just how it should be. Fucked-up garage rock taking the best aspects of early Rip Off Records, CANDY SNATCHERS, ZEKE and a healthy dose of Sir JAY REATARD. It's rough and raw, but with enough hooks and personality to carry it through. I am particularly enamored by the song "Your Fired, I Quit" (sic). I just found my new party record—pass me a goddamn beer. (TB)
(Deranged, www.derangedrecords.com)

BULEMICS – "Still Too Young To Care" CD+DVD

I completely saturated myself with stuff like THE BULEMICS and their Junk Records brethren (if not in actuality, then in spirit) prior to turning 21 and actually going to bars. Basing my assertions on all the album covers, lyrical content, gruff hollerin', and guitar shredding, I was convinced that every bar was filled with half-naked heroin junkie partiers, all worshipping Johnny Thunders and drinking whiskey like it was Gatorade. Then I turned 21 and realized that it's nothing like that at all and all those bands immediately started to seem silly. Maybe I've just been going to the wrong places (not that I'd really want to kick it with that sort anyway nowadays) or went soft. But THE BULEMICS seemingly haven't changed in ten years, as this retrospective package features the same overblown guitar wank and fake strut bullshit in each and every song. Good thing there's thirty fucking six tunes and DVD here to drive the point home that these BULEMICS like to fuck, get fucked up, and rock the fuck out. The cover art of a bleeding naked nympho didn't quite sell me on it either. I'll take a shot of FEAR without the AC/DC chaser please...thanks. (MC)
(Scarey, www.scareyrecords.com)

BURNING THE PROSPECT / SILENCE – split EP

Poland's SILENCE mine the harsh terrain of Finnish hardcore, sounding like a less together UNKIND; plenty of gloomy breakdowns interspersed with D-beat mayhem. BURNING THE PROSPECT are the fucking barnburners on this disc. Three tracks of super harsh Swedecore, like a rougher SKITSYSTEM (if you can believe that)—this shit fucking *rages*. Blown-out hardcore with some absolute killer breakdowns. I've just rewound this fucker three times! Boston thrash at its finest (that's Boston Lincolnshire UK, not MA). Bring it! (TB)
(I've Come For Your Children, 252 Barker Rd, Nashville, TN 37214)

CAMPUS STERMINII / NULLA OSLA – split EP

Two dirty, slightly crusty Italian hardcore groups. NULLA OSLA plays fast and noisy but the vocals are barked in a way that got annoying. CAMPUS STERMINII has dual vocalists and a heavy-yet-melodic Scandinavian crusty sound. I'm not really up on the Italian hardcore scenen but CAMPUS STERMINII had me headbanging. (MH)
(Disastro Sonoro, www.disastrosonoro.altervista.org)

THE CARPETTES – "Small Wonder/2ne1"

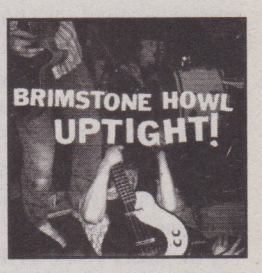
Arguably the finest outing from this '70s UK act, currently championed by the Japanese as the greatest thing since sliced AUTOMATICS. Sorry, bad collector trend joke. Anyway, what can you say about this? Far more vicious than they would ever be after this, one could probably squeak by with owning just this 45 from their entire catalog and ignoring the rest. And, thanks to Last Year's Youth, 464 people actually can without paying big collector prices. Gee, I wonder if this one will vanish quickly...again. (MC)
(Last Year's Youth, no address, hahahahahahaha!!!)

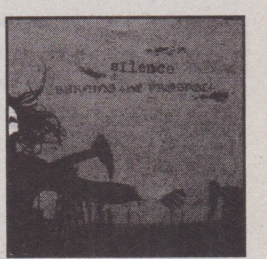
THE CATBURGLARS – "Holy Shit" EP

Pretty basic trashy garage-y punk rock, with the prerequisite distorted vocals…actually everything on this is distorted. They made it sound like you're listening to people listen to the record, a la the MUMMIES record where they actually just sit there playing their records. Anyway, the songs are upbeat, rockin' and fun, except for "Your Girlfriend's a Dumbass" cuz, I dunno, I'm just not down with songs that hate on women. That's just me bein' (PC).
(Tooth Decay, myspace.com/catburglars)

CHOKE COCOI / URBANOS – split CD

URBANOS are a female-fronted hardcore band from Argentina and have good lyrics and a nice style—which at times can be derivative of a lot of bands I have heard over the years that hail from the southern hemisphere. Total raw hardcore. CHOKE COCOI's sound is a bit harsher with tradeoff vocals. I like the straight-ahead gui-





tars and overall I think I like their recording a little more. Both bands are overtly political and lyrically address some good topics. The two bands contained on this CD play similar styles of crust/hardcore that remind me of a lot of '90s bands that didn't really hold up to the test of time but that were nevertheless really good and essential parts of the scene. They have a place and time, and live they gotta rule. (I also think that there are a lot of bands in other genres which couldn't withstand the test of time who are put on pedestals just because they were there and had a record limited to 300 copies because no one gave a fuck then. Hardcore revivalists take note.) (WK)
(Takefour, www.takefourcollective.com)

CITIZEN FISH / LEFTOVER CRACK – "Deadline" CD

Bloody hell, this is so good. The two preeminent ska/punk powerhouses showcase five new tracks each (well, to be accurate, six from the 'CRACK)—and in my humble opinion, this is as good as anything, if not better, than they've done heretofore. If that's not enough, each covers a classic from their current, and former (i.e. SUBHUMANS and CHOKING VICTIM) incarnations. "Deadline" is quite superb, and quite restores one's faith in the power of crust and grubbiness! A match made in the heaven of your favorite squatted basement. (RK)
(Fat, www.fatwreck.com)

THE CLASH – "A Riot of My Own" 3xLP

Pointless, utterly pointless. Seriously, there must be 100 THE CLASH bootlegs out there, plus all the official releases still in print, to justify not putting out this subpar piece of shit. Trust me, if the shit was any good, the remaining members of the THE CLASH would have already cashed in on it and the money would be going to them and some big major label, instead of some sleazy bootlegger. I wish some of these bootleggers would invest in putting out new stuff by present bands instead of poor quality live and rehearsal recordings by bands we have heard way too much of already. Don't buy. (JF)
(bootleg, no address)

CLASHDOGS / IMPERIAL LEATHER – "Crash Your Border" split CD

Stockholm's IMPERIAL LEATHER charge right out of the gates with their no-frills brand of UK82 punk. The female/male trade-off vocal combo definitely lends itself to VIOLATORS comparisons, yet the male vocalist brings a little more MOTÖRHEAD and a little less skinhead. As you would expect with ex-members of BRUCE BANNER and DS-13, these veterans have no problem churning out five catchy street punk anthems. The remaining four songs on this split are left for Osaka's CLASHDOGS, who also play burly street punk with a little less focus on melody, and a little more attention to a thrashier UK82 hardcore sound. All in all, not bad for a split CD. (CC)
(MCR Company, www.dance.ne.jp/~mcr/)

CLOCKCLEANER – "Frogrammer" EP

While the title track sounds nothing like the rest of this Philly trio's output, it is fucking great nonetheless. Recorded in February 2005, "Frogrammer" is pure late-'70s LA no-wave/proto punk. By contrast, the B-side's dirging, slashing guitars on "Early Man" are a good reference for where their later recordings would end up. And by up, I mean *up* the ass of BIG BLACK. Put this band on Touch and Go already. (CC)
(Parts Unknown, www.partsunknownrecords.com)

CONDENADA – "Amor Es Amor" EP

Wow, the first song on this EP, "Amor Es Amor," fucking rules. Sounds like a more raw, hardcore GITS. The other songs are less melodic and less catchy, but more intense—kinda like SPITBOY, actually, without the long-windedness. As always with Lengua Armada releases, the packaging is really nice—this has cool silk-screen-looking cover art and big fold out poster/lyric sheet—and you have to be "in the know" to track one down. Good luck! (PC)
(Lengua Armada, 1302 Hayes Street, San Francisco, CA 94117)

CONTAMINATORS – "No Friends" EP

Here's another great release from the folks at Going Underground. CONTAMINATORS are bratty, pissed-off punks who are just goddamned sick of the shit you are feeding them. The music is messy and distorted and the vocals are barely audible, but I wouldn't have it any other way. Turn it up! (CK)
($5 ppd: Going Underground, 1822 G St., Bakersfield, CA 93301)

CRIATURA / POLITBURO – split EP

POLITBURO plays keyboard-y art-punk with some creeping emo-punk influence. Warbly vox, very dramatic, but nothing to really grab hold of your attention. CRIATURA features dual male-female vox; as with CONDENADA I hear a SPITBOY influence. Intense, with a bit of an emo factor. The trebliness of the music and high register of the vocals makes it sound like this record is spinning about five RPMs too fast; that alone makes it hard for me to get into. (PC)
(Malaraza, Apd. C. 6037, 50080 Zaragoza, SPAIN)

CROW – s/t 12"

Remember when Robbie Redcheeks and RAIN ON THE PARADE proclaimed "hardcore and metal will never gel"? No, you say? Well, they were so wrong. CROW are the true masters of crusty, metallic hardcore. There is really no denying it. This is a new five-song 12" EP that is already impossible to find for a normal price, with 1000 copies pressed (800 of those ending up Japan). The A-side is a seven-minute metal epic and the flip is four faster hardcore crushers. For those who are gonna miss out, it's not as good as last year's amazing *Bloody Tear*, but it's at least as good as their past efforts. You already know you want this, dudes and dudettes, so I bid you good luck in your search, as I myself shall be your competition in hunting this sucker down. (JU)
(Crow, no address)

DANCE FOR DESTRUCTION – CD

Keyboard-infused contemporary punk, poised to jump on the next Warped Tour—though this isn't anything I would ever listen to, it's well played and the keyboardist has some good and original counter-melodies to otherwise stagnant mall punk standards. (BS)
(Bound by the Black Rag, 1789 Lockwood Drive, Ukiah, CA 95482)

DE NOVISSIMIS / TUNGUSKA – split EP

The bass is so fucking high in the mix on the TUNGUSKA side of this—arggggh, it's killing me. I don't know what to say about it. I guess at times it sounds like a lackluster FROM ASHES RISE meets early 2000s screamo? Whatever you want to call it—go ahead, I don't give a chit. DE NOVISSIMIS sound like they have been studying their early '90s Canadian hardcore handbook, mixed in with some modern doomy stuff. Sounds good to me, eh? (NE)
(Rimbaud, www.rimbaudrecords.com)

DESTRUCKTIONS – "Complete Destrucktions" LP

Fuck man!!!! This record is great! The DESTRUCKTIONS were just one of the amazing bands that made it out of Finland. Nice fast and aggressive hardcore punk with snotty fucking vocals (which made so many of those old bands great)—the urgency of it all is captivating. Side one has the old LP from 1983 and comp stuff as well; side two has the rest of the LP and demos!!!!!! Yes, I love this shit, and I would love to see more demo releases; those early recordings were sick. This comes in a nice gatefold sleeve and has a cool history laid out for us all, with photos and lyrics. A must-buy. (MS)
(Hardcore Holocaust, www.hardcoreholocaust.com)

DEXKONCIERTO – "Resistiendo la Dexintrgracion" CD

Pretty awesome DIY Colombian street punk. The 26 songs on this CD span their 20 years (!) as a band. I think they describe it best as "20 years of glue, alcohol and pills. 20 years of narco-terrorism, massacres, and corrupted governments… a CD you must have for the history of punk when it meant revoltry and chaos." Right on. (AA)
(www.dexkoncierto.net)

THE DIRTY SCUMS – "The First 25 Yearz" 2xCD

A Belgian band celebrating 25 years of existence and this release covers all of it. You can hear their start as a sloppy punk band, their evolution to Oi and metal, and finally how they settle on a fixation for the RAMONES. I like the early stuff with the female singer Clo. She mostly sings back-up and unfortunately left the band in 1984, so only appears on three songs. However, the cover of THE SEX PISTOLS' "Lonely Boy" where she sings the lead vocal is pretty great. (CK)
(Dirty, thedirtyscums@yahoo.com)

DRAFT DODGER – "First Past The Last Post" LP

Scathing, quirky mid-tempo hardcore from Australia that churns with explosive momentum. These twelve tracks never reach completely blistering speed, but boil under on a tense ECONOCHRIST-style back-and-forth tempo, topped with slathering, on-edge vocals, kinda similar to Texas's ARMY OF JESUS. Clever free-association lyrics pull a lot of wordplay and reassemble everyday phrases, turning old sayings and truisms on their head. Often these types of lyrics dissolve in gobbledygook, but here they are steadied by pointed socio-politcal perspectives on advertising, image, the military, environmental destruction, and other themes. A solid release that also features a DICKS cover—"Hope Ya Get Drafted," of course! (KS)
(Endless Blockade, PO Box 3023, South Brisbane BC, OLD, 41401 AUSTRALIA)

DRAIN THE SKY – CDEP

Did I just throw on a new NEUROSIS record? Even the vocals sound like one of their singers. This is a bit slower and darker than more recent NEUROSIS and has a huge patient sound that I absolutely love. "Image of a Wall" is faster, with trade-off vocals and some nice guitar riffs. DRAIN THE SKY includes former members of I LOVE A PARADE, HIS HERO IS GONE, and a few other bands. OROKU and NEUROSIS are good reference points and this rocks so much I'm at a loss for words. (MH)
(Life Is Abuse, PO Box 20524, Oakland, CA 94620, www.lifeisabuse.com)

DRILLER KILLER – "The 4Q Mangrenade" CD

This new DRILLER KILLER CD sounds a little strange compared to the last one I got to review, almost like they are playing a new style of "bro" crust or some shit. Not that it let me down or anything, but it sounds over-produced, or maybe the vocals have changed over to the *Chaos AD*-era style of SEPULTURA. Some songs on here bust into some rockin', pinch-harmonic-havin' jammers. but they mostly stay in tune with the old stylings. All in all it's a good listen, but I'm not too positive that this will hold a candle to the old records. (NE)
(Crimes Against Humanity, PO Box 1421, Eau Claire, WI 54702)

DRILLER KILLER – "Reality Bites" CD

Metallic Swedish crustcore heavyweights' 1998 full-length album, their fourth, gets reissued. The lyrics are fucking brutal and angry, fitting quite well with the nasty photo of a defensive hand wound on the cover. There's a serious amount of metal here, but it's the good kind of metal, with violent drumming and depraved guitar blasts that have you staring into the abyss with a hatred for the world. The traditional hardcore crust sound still dominates the music though, so punx will not be let down. If you're even remotely into Swedish crust, then you might want to check this band out. Good stuff. (BG)
(Crimes Against Humanity, PO Box 1421, Eau Claire, WI 54702, www.cahrecords.com)

DRILLER KILLER – "Total Fuckin' Brutalized" CD

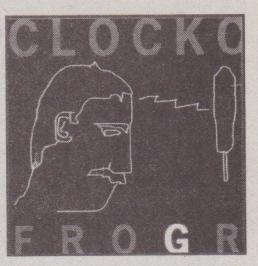
Early '90s Swedish D-beat/metal brings it with those oh-so-familiar charging drums and haikus of horror. This CD is a combination of their first two albums *Total Fucking Hate* and *Brutalized*. It has that raw gritty production that doesn't compromise the sound, it just adds charcter. Rad. (AA)
(Crimes Against Humanity, PO Box 1421, Eau Claire WI 54702. www.cahrecords.com)

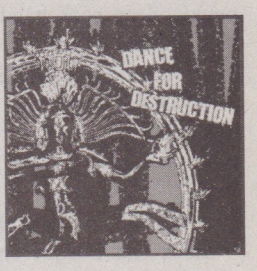
THE EARWIGS – "Hellocaust in Your Head" EP

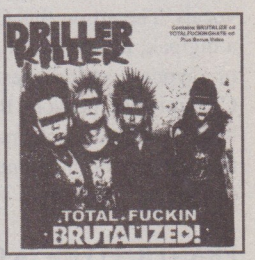
Noisy crap on the waterbed, I-wrote-a-record-Sunday-afternoon-in-one-hour punk jams, recorded for fun by folks who have fun. It sucks, start to finish, just a waste of time—guitar and vocals are nearly indecipherable, percussion sounds like someone banging a wooden dowel onto a 2x4. There are about four songs that are untitled, and they do a cover of the MISFITS' "Bloodfeast" (best song on the 7"). (BS)
(Fuck Music Productions, c/o Zach Howard, 5726 Sussex Ct., Troy, MI 48098, chaosnonmusica@gmail.com, Disorderly Domain, erikdisorder@msn.com)

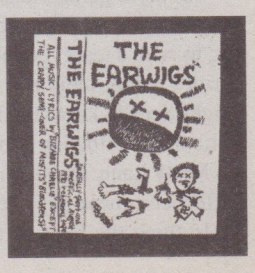
EDDIE AND THE HOTRODS – "Teenage Depression" CD

EDDIE AND THE HOTRODS was one of, if not *the*, most influential band to the first wave of UK punk groups like the CLASH and the PISTOLS. Many movers and shakers in the scene were going to see the HOT RODS play long before the RAMONES made it to those dirty shores. Unfortunately for the band, all the other folks they influenced eclipsed them with more speed and aggression, and so the HOT RODS have kinda slipped into semi-obscurity. Way more pub rock than punk, this LP has as much in common with SWEET, SLADE, or even the WHO, as it does the PISTOLS and the CLASH. That being said, this really is a seminal piece of work, with some real nifty rockers like "Teenage Depression," "The Kids Are Alright," etc. The band has a load of balls and swagger, like the first COCK SPARRER LP or even a more aggressive DR FEELGOOD. The backend of this reissue is a bunch of singles and live tracks, which really









show the band's roots (covers of "Gloria" and "96 Tears"). To the hard-and-fast punkers, the HOTRODS' second LP may fit a little better as the band added a bit of power-pop and dropped a lot of the twelve-bar blues and glam of this LP. However, this reissue is a more than worthy addition to your collection. (TB)
(Captain Oi!, www.captainoi.com)

ELEKTROLUX / SUBTLE TURNIPS – split EP

Some bands, like ELEKTROLUX, defy labels. Try to imagine a blended cocktail of X, WIRE, JOY DIVISION, THE SUBHUMANS, SIOUXIE AND THE BANSHEES, THE DEADBEATS, and a dash of a whole bunch of other shit. Really, this is that good. THE SUBTLE TURNIPS are similar, in that they, too, are tough to label. With these guys, imagine a shaken cocktail. This time, the ingredients include O-LEVEL, THE SWELL MAPS, FLIPPER, and THE SEX PISTOLS. It's possible that I'm also getting just a little taste of THE WIPERS. Again, this is really that good. If you do nothing else this week, do what you can to locate this one. You will not be disappointed. (KK)
(Jojo, www.myspace.com/jojorecords)

FIVE-O – "Get Down!" CD

Not to be confused with the HI-FIVES *Get Down!*, this sloppy punk band sounds like a punk/college rock band circa 1985. Rocking with political lyrics but too slow to be straight punk, maybe like MISSION OF BURMA or SEBADOH. Anyways, I'm not diggin' this much. (RL)
(Citizen Target, no addy)

FLY SHIT – "Bizitza Baina Nola Bizi?" CD

Slow, bad Basque emo rawk with chugga chugga guitars that still somehow sound like awful indie rock topped by spoken/shouted vocals. The art on this CD, which is housed in a digipak, is cartoonish and ugly; I can't think of anyone I could honestly recommend this to. Certainly not the worst thing I've ever reviewed here, but there's not much on this that falls in the category of "maximum rocknroll." (GN)
(Bergarako Gaztetxea)

FRANTIC FIVE – "A Go Go at a Cave Near You…." CD

'60s-style garage fans take note! The Greek veterans of farfisa-fueled rock 'n' roll are leaving us with a teaser collection of live tracks and rarities before their new album comes out. You might already know the FIVE from the slew of cool singles floating around or from their 10" on Misty Lane. Remaining faithful to their '60s influences, these guys belt out impressive originals along the lines of the MYSTERIANS or the CASTAWAYS. This is mostly upbeat, hip-shaking rock to party and dance to while drinking loads of ouzo. Of course, there are a couple of obligatory covers here, including a good rendition of "Liar, Liar." The majority of the live tracks are of impressive, studio-like quality, but one or two sound a bit marginal. I love to see cool bands from places like Greece, where the scene is small and bands like this aren't done just as a fad. Check this out. (BG)
(Inka, www.inkainc.com)

GASMASK TERRÖR – LP

The first thing I noticed about this record is that the artwork looks *a lot* like the second DEATHREAT LP. Intentional or not, the two are not musically and lyrically that dissimilar, though GASMASK TERRÖR leans a bit more towards straight Swedish-style D-beat bands like UNCURBED or DISKONTO, with just a hint of the rockin' tendencies of, say, INEPSY. All in all, this is very well executed—driving and powerful (more so than their debut EP, though a bit less wild), less predictable than yer typical crust fare, and excellently recorded and produced. This (French) band complements their brief English-language songs with somewhat more in-depth political commentary and translations into French, Spanish, German, and Japanese. The one thing I don't dig is the vocalist, whose rasping delivery has become a bit too stylized and monotonous to convey much excitement or energy. Otherwise, a solid effort. (CS)
(Ratbone, ratbone.free.fr)

GIUDA – LP

Italian hardcore with heavy guitars, and blown-out vocals that don't sound like demons taking impossible shits (which is a relief). Mila and the folks produced a really good record here. Lyrically it's dark, and musically I think of BOXED IN at moments, maybe because of the guitars. These folks were from DDI and BY ALL MEANS, and this is more hardcore than their previous projects. It's great to see them still going at it. (MS)
(Agipunk, www.agipunk.com)

THE GIZMOS – "Live in Bloomington 1977/1978" 2xCD

Two discs of live "Hoosier Hysteria"...what's not to love? THE GIZMOS, my favorite inept '70s zine dorks turned punk gods, are on full display on this mammoth live release, warts, fuck-ups, bad jokes and all. Disc one features the first version of the band, responsible for the classic first three singles, live on their infamous World Tour, which consisted of a couple shows in Indiana. As a gigantic fan of this band, the set captured here is a huge treat for me, as they come off just as loose and hilarious as I had been hoping for. Disc two features the Dale Lawrence version of the band, which took them from being stoner zine geeks into full-on classic poppers seemingly overnight (or, as the dates suggest, one year's time), and it's equally impressive. If you dig classic Midwestern punk, this is the geekiest release you're likely to come across this year. Perfect! (MC)
(Gulcher, www.gulcher.gemm.com)

THE GRAVETONES – "Dig It!" CD

Oh fuck...another horror-themed band going for everything under the sun: punk, hard rock, garage, surf, blankabilly...ugh! No!!! (MC)
(Criminal IQ, www.criminaliq.com)

HARRIES '89 – CD

Half of the Dutch '90s pop-punk band the HARRIES are back with this band that sounds pretty much exactly the same: catchy tunes with sing-along vocals. This incarnation has a little more of a street punk, but is still based in pop hooks and choruses. (PC)
(www.harries89.nl, info@harries89.nl)

HASTA LA VISTA SOCIAL CLUB – "Inhale the Evil" CD

HLVSC hail from Finland, but I bet I could describe their crowd worldwide. Yep, HLVSC would be the band that would appeal to those who worship at the JOHNNY CASH, RANCID and SOCIAL DISTORTION (all eras!) altars. You know, they have swallow tattoos, perfectly rolled jeans, push-up bras, and styled hair. Yes people, HLVSC would appeal to you punks who drive classic cars and wear undershirts with button-up shirts. Musically, I find HLVSC solid at what they do, but not really my thing. But then again I am a slob and am writing this review with a big mustard stain on my shirt. (JF)
(Drop Out Family, www.dropoutfamily.com)

HEARTFELT – "Take It or Leave It" CD

This is good! The Netherlands' HEARTFELT deliver fourteen tracks of slick-as-hell yet soulful angry youth crew hardcore. This is how this shit is supposed to be done! The first song just jumped out of the dang stereo. This shiny silver Frisbee is catchy, smart, and energetic as shit, with great little guitar leads all over. I've been waiting for a hardcore band of this type to excite me for a while. It may be clichéd but I seriously wanna mosh the wussie-ass review room into oblivion. If you dig shit like CARRY ON, LIGHTS OUT, FIRED UP, or any of that shiz, there's a strong chance you'll dig this too. (JU)
(Shield Recordings, Daensdelsstraat 67c, 5018 ER Tilburg, NETHERLANDS, www.theshieldhardcore.com)

THE HEAVY HEARTS – CD

Swaggering, muscular indie-rock from this Seattle foursome. THE HEAVY HEARTS borrow liberally from the playbook of later FUGAZI, pairing that band's propulsive rhythms and guitar squall with the driving, straight-ahead rock of HOT SNAKES. Occasionally the vocal histrionics wear a bit, but generally the slightly nasal, detached singing fits the music perfectly. Unlike many bands that look to FUGAZI for inspiration, they haven't let the guitar experimentation take the place of songwriting, although most of the songs go on a bit too long. On the whole, this is great stuff. I just checked their website and saw that they actually played here last week. Too bad I missed them. Next time I'll definitely check it out. (AM)
(Swingline, PO Box 19712, Seattle, WA 98109, www.theheavyhearts.com)

HOLOKAUST – "Into the Void of Oblivion" LP

Straight ahead D-beat. You know the story—a song or three about wars. There is even a track about how there are 54 (I think the number is now 47 with the US Government recognizing 20) wars going on in the world right now. There have been so many in the last 40 years, it's hard to keep track sometimes. And they ask the question, "Doesn't war ever get old?" Toss in those barked crust vocals and plentiful guitar solos and you have HOLOKAUST. There's nothing wrong with this, but in my current mood I didn't need another just-OK crust band. I liked the artwork, though; the record has a grainy green/grey/black cover, with a person who looks in pain putting his fingers in his ears and some nice gold lettering. (MH)
(Despotic, PO Box 832, Long Beach, CA 90801)

ICTUS / THIS THING CALLED DYING – split LP

The ICTUS side of this split gives us a dose of politically minded metalcore, *en espanol*, with an intensely nihilist leaning. It's pretty good, but not really that exciting for me. THIS THING CALLED DYING rounds out the other side with some high drama metallic hardcore crust. It alternates between fast and furious, and incredibly epic. Yeah, they brought it. (AA)
(Alerta Antifascista. c/o Timo Nehmtow, Postfach 2318, 24913 Flensburg, GERMANY, www.no-pasaran.org)

THE INDECISION ALARM – CD

This sounds like PROPAGHANDI when the bass player sings, with a little early BAD RELIGION. It rocks the house in a melodic hardcore way. Eight energetic tunes with speed and a raspy singer to keep this apart from the radio-ready masses. (RL)
(www.tiaband.com)

IN LIARS WE TRUST – CD

This reminds me a lot of the political punk records from the UK 25 years ago. Angry, basic, sprightly punk, with an overt anti-system bent, male and female vocals, and raging lyrics. It doesn't quite have the poise or tunes of the A-HEADS or ICON AD, but it reminds me more than a little of the LOST CHERREES. I give it an A for effort and attitude and a C+ for execution. It does get a little wearing after eight songs, but I do admire their plucky political stance. (RK)
(Foss Face, www.foss-face.com)

INTERLUDE – "L'Hiver" EP

This takes me back about five years to the final moments of when emo really did mean emotional hardcore and it didn't have anything to do with tight pants or eyeliner. Emo is a term that has been so used, abused, and turned inside out to be attached to the most ridiculous shit…What man would want her now? French Canadians are keeping the spirit alive and thankfully not just sticking to ruts in the well-worn road. There are some really nice unexpected moments on here. If you're not a tool I recommend looking in to these guys. (ST)
(Midi D'Ossau, www.tresxxx.org/theinterludeband)

THE (INTERNATIONAL) NOISE CONSPIRACY – "Live at Oslo Jazz Festival" CD

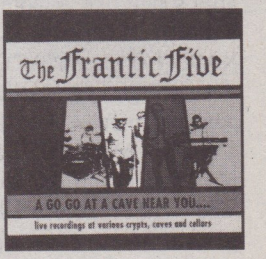
I'm not really an expert on jazz. Actually, I'm not even any kind of casual authority on jazz. Truth be told, I don't even know what a Fender Rhodes is. But on this live disc, recorded in 2002, the Swedish boys and girl are joined by two famous (apparently) Swedish jazz musos, one on sax, and one on the Rhodes effort. Between them, the seven turn ten (I)NC classics (culled from their first couple of Epitaph discs) into more freeform jams. I dunno if it's jazz. Sounds more like the GRATEFUL DEAD groovin' on "Smash It Up," "Capitalism Stole My Virginity," et al. They're accomplished, for sure, and I really like the originals. I couldn't quite get into these elongated, hornified versions, but mebbe that's my crass under-appreciation of jazz? It's cool to hear the song intros, and between song banter, in Swedish, though. (RK)
(Alternative Tentacles, www.alternativetentacles.com)

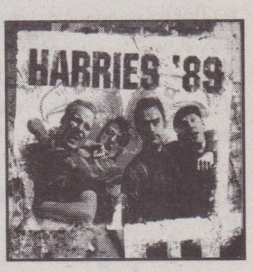
JILTED – "1998-2005" CD

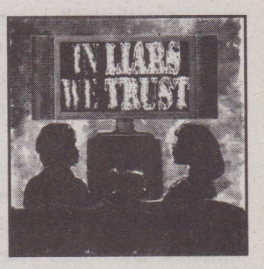
This long-running DIY Italian hardcore band put out some really solid releases. My favorites are the split LP with MURDER DISCO X and the split CD with BEYOND DESCRIPTION, which makes perfect sense since those were the last things the band released after they had really perfected their sound. This CD combines all their output including comp tracks and an unreleased version of "No Business Punk." Musically, JILTED stays true to forbearers like IMPACT but with their own style. The lyrics are straight-forward no-nonsense DIY staples that somehow always ring true. If that sounds like the kind of thing you like, here is my pick of the month out of what I got for review. A good band worthy of this retrospective. (WK)
(Angry, www.angelfire.com/ne/angry/)

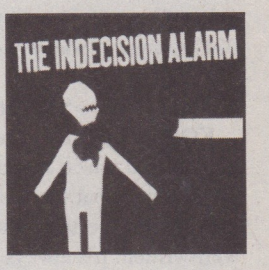
JUMP OFF A BUILDING – "Left Out" EP

Another great new Bay Area hardcore band, once again in the style of early-'80s USHC but adding vital elements of originality and good songwriting. The tempo and off-kilter riffs bring to mind BLACK FLAG at times, but of course that's only a starting point. Opening track









"Left Out" is a total classic with a killer hook. Six songs in all, and cool, non-cliché art completes the package. Jump now or regret forever! (CS)
(Lengua Armada, 1302 Hayes Street, San Francisco, CA 94117)

KARNVAPEN ATTACK – "Kunst Und Unkunst" LP

This does not sound like MOB 47. What it does sound like is more difficult to pin down, because this record is all over the place. KARNVAPEN ATTACK mash together gutturral grind growls, harsh crust yelling, clean poppy harmonies, whistling, and modern hardcore style group choruses—and that's just the vocals. The musical accompaniment is some kind of fast hardcore with sappy emo melodic parts. This record is a nightmare. Although not unlistenable it lacks any of the sort of cohesion needed to hold together a full-length record. File this under Amazing-Crust Train Wreck. (BN)
(Trabuc, PO Box 160, 46740 Carcaixent, Valencia, SPAIN, www.nodo50.org/trabucrecords)

KIELTOLAKI – "Totaalisen Tuhon Huominen" EP

Six crashing trax in the best tradition of early '80s Finnish HC—like a tightly wound early RIISTETYT. This has somewhat richer production with thrilling originality in the guitar changes of pace; it boasts loads of power while making for distinctive, original compositions. *Totaalisen Tuhon Huominen* has all the punch of their previous EP, but with an added urgency. "Vihasta Ammennan Voimaa" is an especially chilling number that practically gives off steam. All songs are well under two minutes, and make you ache for an album's worth of this stuff. Strongly recommended! (SS)
(Moo Cow, 38 Larch Circle, Belmont, MA 02478, www.moocowrecords.com)

KOBAYASHI – "Neuanstrich" LP

KOBAYASHI has a really smooth Deutsch-punk sound which maybe at first comes off as nothing new, but the more I listen, the more it starts to hit me that this is really layered and well-written. It's always good when something doesn't hit you right away as you may end up listening to it more consistently in the long run. This record is nicely packaged in a gatefold cover with lyrics in Spanish, English, and German. The art is pretty interesting and fits the band's sound—always a rough thing to pull off. Parts that stand out to me are the personal lyrics which are well-written and easy to relate to, such as "Bruno" about the bear from Italy that traveled to Bavaria and was shot—the first bear in Germany in a long time as I recall. "Abriss Als Zie" is about going to shows and hearing the same views and sounds but still enjoying it, the good recording and solid musicianship. That is a lot that stands out for sure. I could compare KOBAYASHI to bands like MANIFESTO JUKEBOX or a less chaotic OMA HANS. My friend Marga swears they remind her of AGE and ASSAY along with other bands from the '90s; I didn't listen to punk like this in the '90s, but I'll take her word for it (haha). We both agree this is good stuff. (WK)
(Tofu Guerilla tofu-g.net.ms)

KOLOKOL "Flammer & Farger" LP

Killer! An exceptional 14-track LP of world class hardcore from Norway, in the classic SO MUCH HATE/KAFKA PROSESS/BANNLYST style of speeding, melodic Norwegian hardcore. Delivered with, but not dominated by proficient musicianship and complexity, capped with hoarse, howling vocals and intricate guitar leads. Slowing to mid-tempo, KOLOKOL shifts the focus to driving bass-lines and achieves some of the bleak, ponderous mood found in the best of Norwegian hardcore. The artful political lyrics about environmental destruction, poverty, warfare, etc. are sung in Norwegian, but translated and presented in a really nice deluxe booklet. Mandatory! (KS)
(Moo Cow, 38 Larch Circle, Belmont, MA 02478, www.moocowrecords.com)

KRUMBUMS – "As the Tide Turns" CD

I think I reviewed these guys a couple of years back and even then couldn't quite put my finger on their sound. The foundation is clearly UK82 bands like the VARUKERS and ONE WAY SYSTEM with some D-beat moments, but the vocals are more akin to some of the folks peddling the new wave of Spanish speaking hardcore from the US like PELIGRO SOCIAL or even some old Italian hardcore like WRETCHED. On top of that are these crazy guitar leads that sound like FROM ASHES RISE or something. It took a little while to get used to, but after a couple of listens I was sold. I bet they are ripping live too. (TB)
(TKO, 8941 Atlanta Ave #505, Huntington Beach, CA 92646)

LAST RIGHTS – "No Guts, No Glory" LP

My original review for this reissue was going to be: "Chunks: You're moshing." But instead, I decided to propose a challenge. I defy anyone to find twelve minutes of more testosterone-charged, knuckle-headed, blazing HARDcore than the six flawless tracks recorded by this short-lived Boston band. It can't be done. Why? Because these songs have everything you could ask for in a meat-eating suburban hardcore band fronted by a hockey-obsessed beardo in a flannel: brotherhood, fighting, unity, straight edge, and more fighting. You would think since LAST RIGHTS played only one show in 1983 that they would have hardly left a footprint. Yet to this day, J Mascis still takes pleasure in watching the only straight edge asshole in the crowd punch stoned-out indy bohemians when DINOSAUR JR blazes through a cover of "Chunks" for an encore. This recording gets an 11/10, because it is tougher than God. (CC)
(Reflex, www.reflexdistribution.com)

MUSIC MACHINE – "Best of the Music Machine" LP

THE MUSIC MACHINE was one of the best bands from the '60s psychedelic underground scene. I'll fist fight anyone who disagrees with me. Like LOVE, THE BEATLES, and a handful of others, THE MUSIC MACHINE was close to perfection. Sean Bonniwell's voice was mesmerizing, and the music created by the band was always unique and original. Listening to these tracks, in the right setting, is a transcendental experience. Most people only know the quintessential punker "Talk Talk" from just about every '60s compilation, but that song is only the tip of the iceberg. The first self-titled LP contains some excellent songs and is absolutely essential for real music fans' collections, but the majority of their best material came out on singles or was unreleased at the time. This is where Rhino Records came in, originally in 1984, with this so-called "best of" collection. This is better than a greatest hits comp—it's a collection of many of those singles and rarities not on the first album! There is one track from the LP and a single version of "Talk Talk," but the rest are B-sides and rarer releases. Rhino was cool as shit back in the day for putting out collections of lost '60s punk bands, and it's great to see this out again on vinyl. Warning! If you already have the collection *Beyond the Garage* then you already have these tracks. That is a CD-only release though (except for the recent, rare bootleg vinyl issue), so get this to have the songs on their proper format. (BG)
(bootleg, no address)

THEE MIDNITERS – "Everybody Needs Somebody To Love" EP

One frat boy stomp of a cover brings us to the flip, which is a fuzzed-out dancefloor classic. The less dirty—but in my view, higher quality—side of the '60s garage scene. Norton does it again: high standard of pressing, high standard of band, and high standard of tunes. A label that knows its stuff. (SD)
(Norton, www.nortonrecords.com)

THEE MIDNITERS – "I Found a Peanut/Love Special Delivery"

Everyone should thank the fine folks at Norton Records for reissuing this fabulous record from East LA's THEE MIDNITERS. "I Found a Peanut" is one of my all-time favorite songs. When I hear the first notes, I just have to jump up from wherever I am sitting, standing, or lying, and start dancing like a madwoman. The music is so catchy and the lyrics are so fun: he was hungry and now is happy, because he found a peanut. And when singer Little Willie G. says "And theennn…" in his low drawl, I go crazy. God, I love this song. The B-side, "Love Special Delivery," doesn't send me into such a frenzy, but it is another amazingly catchy garage rock dance tune. You won't be able to stop turning this record over and over. If you dig the high energy '60s style of THE WAILERS and THE SONICS, you'll love THEE MIDNITERS. And lucky for you Norton has also re-issued the other two singles and an album, *In Thee Midnite Hour*. Get them all. You'll be happy you did. (CK)
(Norton, www.nortonrecords.com)

THEE MIDNITERS – "Jump, Jive And Harmonize/ Thee Midnite Feeling"

.....THANK YOU NORTON RECORDS!!!!!!! I'm sorry for any bad things I said about you in the past.....YOU GUYS RULE!!!!!!!!! This month Norton reissues three MIDNITERS singles in beautiful craft paper company sleeves!!!!!!!!! It's like it's motherfucking Christmas or something...is a piano going to fall on me on the way home?????!!!!!!!!!!!! Of these three reissues, I get to review the best one of the lot.....and isn't the original worth a million dollars or something like that???? Well now I got this powerful re-ish to fight off my enemies with.....so FUCK YOU!!!!! Bend over and take it like a man!!!!! THEE MIDNITERS are to East Los Angeles what the SONICS are to Tacoma.....heavy motherfucking mid-sixties bands that put those areas on the map!!!!!! If you're a DJ and you wanna blow the party's mind, pick these puppies up for your next gig and give those squares the full bulldozer effect....!!!!!!!!! P.S. Hey Norton, how about a collection of the sweet slower numbers that these dudes do so well, just in case I find myself in a romantic mood.....!!! (SW)
(Norton, www.nortonrecords.com)

MODERAT LIKVIDATION – "Never Mind the Bootlegs…" CD

Ah, Sweden, how do you keep things so basic, yet so raging? This CD compiles the tracks MOD LIK recorded for Swedish Public Radio (which were originally released in 1983 on cassette and recently reappeared as the *Kottahuvue* EP), the *Nitad* EP, and the demo tracks from '83 (that were recently released as the *Marionett I Kedjor* EP). Alongside ANTI-CIMEX and SHITLICKERS, this is classic-era Swedish hardcore at its finest. If you don't have any more space for three bulky 7"ers in that condo you just bought, you should at least pick this up. A no-brainer. (JU)
(Havoc, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.havocrex.com)

NAKED – "One Step Forward" CD

Discography-type collection of all this old anarcho-punk band's material. NAKED started in '79, though aside from their track on Crass Records' *Bullshit Detector 2* compilation, their only vinyl release was 1983's *One Step Forward* EP on the SUBHUMANS' Bluurg label. This disc contains demos from 1979 and 1980, which sound a little like a punker, rougher ZOUNDS or OMEGA TRIBE. The EP was more up-beat, more in tune with the UK82/Riot City sound than the post-punk anarcho sound, really. Listening to the 1984 demo it seems they were heading back to ZOUNDS, or maybe UK DECAY territory—nice, dark, and melodic. It's really cool to see these old bands and their records and demos see the light of day. The CD comes with a nice quality booklet, as it usually is with Overground releases. (AD)
(Overground, PO Box 1NW, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE99 1NW, UNITED KINGDOM)

NEW BLOODS – "A Ritual" EP

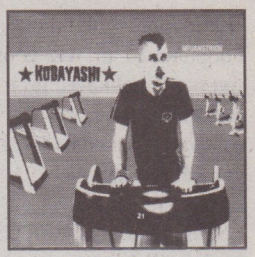
I saw this band play an awesome, sweaty, dance-crazed show in the Mission a few weeks ago, and was totally pumped on their sound—dark, driving, and exciting primal punk rock with drums, bass, and a violin (believe it). This record doesn't quite capture the raw energy of that show, but is nonetheless great, pulling from influences like the DOG FACED HERMANS, '90s riot grrl, newer stuff like COUNTY Z, and in some of their more off kilter moments the early RAINCOATS, though they mostly have a slightly—for lack of a better word—funky foundation that the RAINCOATS never had. They are definitely on the more dance-y side of art punk, though on their last (and best) song "Cut" they do a convincingly thoughtful RAINCOATS impersonation. I don't hear too many bands going for this sound overall, which is a shame, and with interesting personal lyrics (with political overtones that touch on feminist issues), I give this big thumbs up. (GN)
(Raw Sugar, PO Box 53011, New Orleans, LA 70153)

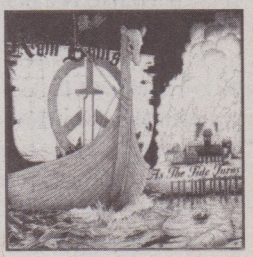
NITAD – "Utboling På Livstid" EP

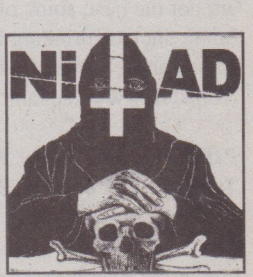
Loose drums, rock 'n' roll-tinged yet still hardcore guitars, snotty vocals… It's actually hard for me to write about this 7" because I am so bored with this idea of music; I know it's probably the sound emanating from every hardcore kid's practice space at this point and I am gonna be stuck with it for a long time. There is something—a feeling, an idea??—absent from this record and I can't figure it out. Some hardcore records are able to transmit anxiety and rage and boredom and snottiness, to make you feel part of something for a minute and ten seconds or whatever, and some just make you mentally list the band's reference points as you consider what to make for dinner or if you are gonna walk or take the bus. I mean, this record is maybe in the realm of, like, THE REGULATIONS or CAREER SUICIDE?? (LG)
(Deranged, www.derangedrecords.com)

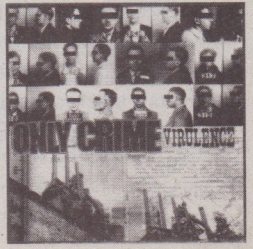
NUCLEAR DEATH TERROR – LP

Here's some undeniably brutal DOOM- and DISCHARGE-influenced crust, with deep gutteral trade-off vocals. The lyrics are politically minded and speak to the









destruction of the world, media distortion, the cooption of the punk aesthetic, and just the utter fucked-up-edness of the world. Extra awesome points awarded for the song about pissing on cop's graves. Brutal, heavy, pissed… what more do you want from your crust? Oh, well, yes, it does have a fold-out poster depicting the apocalypse and yes, the NAUSEA font was used. Just buy the fucking record. (AA)
(Plague Bearer, PO BOX 604 Copenhagen N, DENMARK, www.plaguebearer.com)

NO – "Relax" LP

Relentless two-piece thrash autism from Athens, GA. Classic boxy DRI riffage with the occasional anthemic breakdown or mind-rattling noised-out NO COMMENT styled jam. Corky at times, but rockable. (BS)
(Tsunami, 231 Emery Mills Road, Shaplein, ME 04076, www.tsuthrash.com)

ONLY CRIME – "Virulence" CD

More noticeable than on their debut disc, this band switches from sounding like BLACK FLAG to sounding like the DESCENDENTS. What an awesome vocal gig! Featuring the singer from GOOD RIDDANCE, a BANE guitarist, and Bill Stevenson on drums amongst the five members, this bands tears it up. Do these guys do BLACK FLAG or DESCENDENTS songs live? They've got the sound down. A bit of an unexpected ripper. (RL)
(Fat, www.fatwreck.com)

THE PAUKI – "The Splinter of the Mind" CD

Twelve tracks of beer-soaked street-punk from Russia. Apart from some weird nu-metal type parts and strange effects on the vocals every once in awhile, this band could be Russia's answer to THE DROPKICK MURPHIES. Although the translations of the lyrics are not the best, some of the songs' topics definitely include drinking and playing soccer. On some songs, Sasha plays the flute. (BN)
(Kapkan, www.kapkanrecords.com)

PIROMANOS DEL RITMO – "Nosotros Tenemos El Fuego" CD

The one-sheet reads: "First album of this band from Santiago de Chile, three vocalists, one guitar, one bass, one drumkit, recorded in seven hours. Enough info!" Well, alright, I guess they weren't thoughtful enough to tell us that PIROMANOS DEL RITMO will be throwing a different style of punk/grind/hardcore/whatever at you every time they change a riff or start a new song, but I guess that wouldn't sell CDs…right? (NE)
(D and D, PF 6302, 79039 Freiburg, GERMANY)

PLEASE INFORM THE CAPTAIN THIS IS A HIJACK – "Defeat or Humiliate the United States" LP

I had long given up on expecting another record from this enigmatic band, so to come to the compound today and find this waiting for me was an extremely pleasant surprise. Recorded in 2003, this follow-up to their first twelve-incher expands upon their already expansive palette of experimental, political, melodic hardcore. For all intents and purposes this band marks a lone shining light in the otherwise barren genre of "post-hardcore," emocore, or whatever you want to call it. Of course, I'd expect nothing less than excellence from heavy hitters like onetime *MRR* shitworker Mick Krash (ex-FUEL, JOHN HENRY WEST, TORCHES TO ROME, etc.) and the various ex-members of FORMER MEMBERS OF ALFONSIN he has dragged along with him. This review is all over the map but then again, so is the record. Just think driving, melodic, rousing, catchy hardcore interspersed with rhythmic experiments, soundscapes, and well-chosen samples. Great stuff. Astounding packaging also. It's too bad that it had to come out so long after the band's demise (they broke up, right?). (AM)
(Clean Plate, PO Box 9461, North Amherst, MA 01059)

POODLES / SCUM SYSTEM KILL – split EP

On their first song, SCUM SYSTEM KILL takes lyrics directly from bands like GG ALLIN and ANAL CUNT and changes the gender roles to good effect. Bands insult and degrade women in their songs constantly with no reprieve and it's high time someone got out there and called them on their shit. Think about this next time you throw on some total misogynistic record that everyone loves to sing along to. Does it benefit any of us supposedly fighting to stay outside of mainstream society? Nope. It only divides us even more. The second song livens up the pace with full throttle hardcore crust. SCUM SYSTEM KILL are really droning and rely on driving melody to hold their sound together. There are multiple singers and the chaos of crazy grunts and screams is enough to challenge the senses. POODLES are downright heavy, blown-out crust that reminds me of bands like ACCION MUTANTE and CLUSTERBOMBUNIT but with more of a hardcore element. The recording is really raw for both sides of this split record, which can be a bit hard to take at some points. (WK)
(Spincontrol, spincontrol@mindless.com)

POTBELLY – "Blood Boobs + Beer" CD

In the race to the bottom of the barrel, these five toe-heads are taking the shit-punk genre to new lows, with boring songs, tired clichés, minimal packaging, and a flat recording. At least it comes with a clear plastic CD case, which I used to store another CD after I threw *Blood Boobs + Beer* in the garbage. A rare stinker from what was until now my all-time favorite label, Beer Metal Records. (CS)
(Beer Metal, PO Box 72244, Seattle, WA 98177)

POTBOILER – "56th and Grove/Self Pity for Dummies"

Oh me of little faith. After a gangbuster year of 7"s from Art of the Underground, well worth my twenty-some odd dollars, I decided not to renew for this year. I'd only heard of one of the bands and because I'm a shallow prick I assumed that dude over there just fell off. Luckily this came to me for review or I would have missed these guys. I am sick and tired of the East Coast making East Bay pop punk better than anyone has in the East Bay for like 15 years or more. This is bullshit. I came down here because I was told Jesse Michaels and Doug Sangalang would be making music at all times and there was an army of decent local pop punk bands playing every single night. What do I get? I get a bunch of half assed "hardcore," metal, and the area's only saving grace, THIS IS MY FIST. Unfortunately, This Is Not Enough! I mean that's not entirely true. TULSA is pretty good. Anyway, you're getting in the way of a good rant here. To quote the over-quoted…for pop punk this ain't a mecca…this place is fucked. Anyhoo…POTBOILER would have fit in at Gilman quite well in the early '90s. In my dreams I'm there and they're playing a show with DOWNFALL and BIG RIG. I hear a bit of Long Island up in here too. Maybe a little J. Sully. At any rate these guys are great. They apparently have a demo CD you can pick up from them and are recording some time soon. Don't be a rube. Get on the Trolley. (ST)
(Art of the Underground, www.artoftheunderground.com)

PREVAIL WITHIN / SMARTBOMB – split EP

Fancy. It's on splattered clear vinyl and the graphics and artwork are all like a graphic novel. The music is tough hardcore; I guess PREVAIL WITHIN could be called street-core—they're very SLAPSHOT, with a lean toward THE PIST or SUBMACHINE. SMARTBOMB is faster and less "tough," and reminds me quite a bit of GORILLA BISCUITS and the late '80s New York thing, though with a faster, more mental drummer. (AD)
(Mightier Than The Sword, no address)

PROCESSION OF VULTURES – "Black, White, and Red All Over" EP

When I dropped the needle on this, I just heard drums. Slow, slightly tribal drums went on for a minute or so. The bass eventually joined in and the two plodded away for a while, and then the guitar added some feedback. All this time, I wondered where it was going. After a couple minutes, the hardcore showed up: heavy and mid-paced, with lots of feedback and multiple vocalists bordering on emo. PROCESSION OF VULTURES are patient, never speeding up, and heavy yet melodic. I loved the production and the way this sounds—the distortion, the vocals, etc. Former members of SKARP and WORMWOOD. (MH)
(Inimical, PO Box 2803, Seattle, WA 98111, www.inimical.com)

PROTESTANT – "We Race to the Bottom" EP

Three tracks of modern crust hardcore that combines screaming thrash, low-end churn and pounding downbeat, ripping blast beats, and throaty dual vocal trade-offs. The long song structures and quiet acoustic bridges point this toward the "epic hardcore" camp, but the raw recording and bare-knuckled delivery makes it more about immediate impact than moodiness. Dark lyrics, nice basic silk-screened packaging. (KS)
(Halo of Flies, 930 E. Brady Street, Milwaukee, WI 53202)

PURE COUNTRY GOD – "Baby, Don't Wear No Make Up" CD

Two-piece garage punk that flirts with bluesy elements, which is no surprise considering the countless other bands doing the same thing. The distinguishing factor is that they rely more on good, well-structured songs than recording tricks and excessive bashing, which was a welcome surprise. A fine debut...I'm curious about their next record. (MC)
(Empty, www.emptyrecords.com)

RABIES – "Test Your Might" LP

Southern California's RABIES have been pretty active as of late. I liked their first EP quite a bit, but I feel this LP gets a bit boring for me. It's fast hardcore punk with nice breaks, but something is missing and I just can't figure out what it is. There are several songs that help save this record—"Death Box Destroyer," "Stairs of Shame," and "The Teeth." I think it just lacks power and intensity overall. Perhaps this would have been better a 7"; I bet it also comes off way better live. (MS)
(Sorry State, www.deadmetaphor.com/sorrystate)

REAGAN SS – "Bon Apetit!" EP

This EP has five raging tracks of early '80s hardcore with a slight modern edge. For whatever reason, the production on this reminds me of the last LOOK BACK AND LAUGH EP. Matter of fact, I would have sworn this was recorded at Grizzly Studios up here in Petaluma before I looked on the back cover. Good music, with a great job by Matt on the graphic design. (CC)
(Rabid Dog, PO Box 14821, Haltom City, TX 76117, rabiddogrecords@yahoo.com)

RECIKLAJE – "Hartxs Estamos!" CD

These political punk rockers from Peru play basic, simple, catchy raw punk with a few crusty moments. Ten mid-paced tracks with anarchist leanings in 26 minutes There are some punk 'n' roll elements, some '80s hardcore sounds, some really catchy punk moments, and a few other sounds thrown in. For example, "Luchar" starts out with a '50s rock 'n' roll riff and is equal parts garage rock and punk. (MH)
(c/o Luis Tuesta S., Jr, Callao 229-233, Carmen de la Legua, Callao, PERU, kzlrex@hotmail.com)

RED RED RED – "Mind Destroyer" LP

Mean, loud, distorted, messy noise. The vocals are sung through a crappy microphone so you can't hear what the fuck they are singing. The riffs are catchy, but then everything seems all over the place. But that's alright—just kick back and enjoy the record. (CK)
(Big Neck, Box 8144, Reston, VA 20195, www.bigneckrecords.com)

RETARDED – "Goes Louder" CD

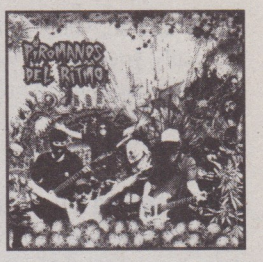
The album cover actually speaks volumes on this one. Four dudes, dressed in denim (jeans and jackets), t-shirts, and Converse, posing in a NY subway car. Sounds like an amalgam of the RAMONES and TURBONEGRO, right? Actually, it's pretty close. RETARDED are more SCREECHING WEASEL/QUEERS than TURBONEGRO, rock and pop and punk. And denim. What's more, they're from Italy. Who would've thought? Indeed, who cares? They sing in the international language of rock (English), and rock /pop pretty hard too. I like it a lot. Ciao. (RK)
(Insubordination, www.insubordinationrecords.com)

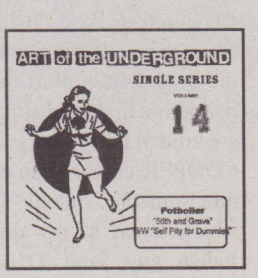
RETCHING RED / THE TWATS – split EP

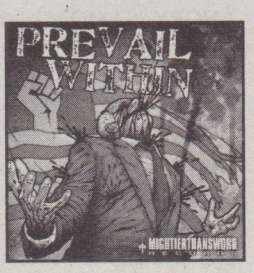
RETCHING RED is the band that Cinderblock went into when TILT split up and this EP is their best stuff yet. Straight-ahead hardcore punk that deals with the usual social issues of breeding and punk kids' alienation. Nothing groundbreaking but this is competent. THE TWATS play something very similar to RETCHING RED but the vocalist just doesn't quite have Cinder's chops. A solid effort from both bands. (JF)
(Overdose On, c/o Justin Enemy, PO Box 525, Fleetwood, PA 19522)

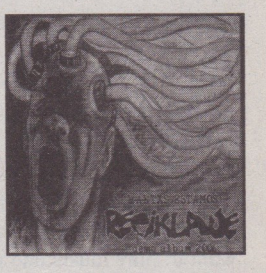
THE ROTTEN LEPRECHAUNS – "Dr. Gore" 10"

As much as I hate the double-7" format, I like the 10" format. In fact, I'd say that I "love" it. It's pure beauty. It can be a 33 rpm record or a 45 rpm record; either one works. THE ROTTEN LEPRECHAUNS chose the 33 rpm option, which allowed them to squeeze ten tracks on this slab of clear/lemon/lime vinyl. While you might be tempted to assume that these guys are Irish, you'd be wrong. They are Danish. All right, enough fluff, let's get to the record. I'd describe this as faster-paced, catchy punk rock/hardcore in the European style, which means it's got a little pop influence. In fact, it almost sounds like it could have come from Germany in the mid-to-late 1980s. It's very well done and if you like this sort of









thing, as I do, you should like it. If this is not normally your cup of tea, this probably won't change your mind (which is really too bad for you). (KK)
(Kadaver, no address)

RUPTURE / THE NERDS – split CD

15 tracks from Australia's RUPTURE, who have been quiet since their singer passed away in 2001. Here the first seven tracks are with Jeff Clayton from ANTISEEN on vocals, which are more pogo-possible straight-up punk rock than the Slap-a-Ham blurr-thrash I mostly remember before this band slipped off my radar; these are kind of perfunctory and include and ALICE COOPER cover. Their other seven tracks feature someone called "The Boss" on vocals , which much to my disappointment is some Italian guy from THE NERDS, not Bruce Springsteen. These actually work better than the Clayton tracks, conjuring just shitty ANGRY SAMOANS-style guitar-driven raw punk—including the apparently homophobic "Sodom Francisco"…oh wait, a quick Google search reveals that to be some right wing pundit catchphrase… Why a bunch of Australians and some Italian guy care enough to criticize one of the United States' best cities two thousand plus miles in either direction from where they live and not stick to overriding theme of this CD (songs about monkeys), I dunno; but I can't get too riled, as in the tradition of the best sketchy bands with Nazi imagery appropriated for a record cover, no lyrics are printed... Y'know, just for the suggestion of putting down SF—my home and a city I love for its tradition of liberal politics as much as its acceptance and tolerance of races and creeds—in the words of ANTISEEN, "Fuck All Ya'll." The CD rounds out with five tracks by THE NERDS, who crank sturdy meat-and-potatoes hardcore cornered by bar rock wank. (KS)
(Scary, CP 516 Succ. 76, 10121 Torino, ITALY, www.scareyrecords.com)

SAD BOY SINISTER – "Life and Death" CD

Straight-ahead adrenalin-fueled punk rock played by people who have been around the Bay Area for quite a while. A little thrash, a little whiskey, and a lot of sweat and spit make up this release. Think 40 year-old skaters who just want to play music and drink beer. (JF)
(Bomb Blast, PO Box 2283, Morgan Hill, CA 95038)

SADVILLE – LP

Messy, noisy, angry and heavy sounds; not really hardcore and not really metal. I could go on trying to describe SADVILLE but right now I have to mention the first track on the B-side. It's fast and ugly with a huge bottom end, and it spits hate. The lyrics begin, "Fuck subliminal progress toward a Walmart police state / We'll dance on the graves of fat men in suits in protest." Fuck yeah! I listened to the track four times in a row. I can't exactly describe the sound and I found the first thing that came to mind very odd—JESUS LIZARD on 45? "University of Babylon/Make Ready the Cross Pt. II" had a stoner rock groove and a guitar solo. There are some noisy heavy hardcore sounds like BORN AGAINST and some newer metalcore sounds like ZANN. Good stuff. (MH)
(Inkblot, 216 6th Ave #3C, Brooklyn, NY 11215, www.inkblotrecords.com)

SALTED WOUNDS – "National Buyproduct" EP

I've probably heard this 200 times, which is about 700 times less than I've seen this band—but see, it wasn't actually SALTED WOUNDS. Every town has two or three different versions of this: bands who play fast-ish metallic punk rock that in no way sets itself apart from the pack. Sorry, guys. (JU)
(Less Art, PO Box 16378, Golden, CO 80401)

SEE YOU IN HELL – "Market Yourself" CD

A CD version of this Czech band's 2005 LP re-released by several Mexican labels. It's a blazing recording; great, rampaging technical metal-tinged hardcore with very Eastern Europe-sounding vocals that are not quite shouted, not quite screamed, but still *very* intense—maybe at points gravelly in an old Japanese punk way. Also having been released on cassette in the Czech Republic, Russia, Indonesia, and Croatia, CD-R in Spain and Germany, CD in Japan, *and* vinyl in the Czech Republic, the title of this record is somewhat and maybe unintentionally ironic, but more power to this band for reaching out to and building connections in far corners of the world. This comes from a scene that's sometimes overlooked (though it produces music no less world class than any other country) and represents their scene with covers of '80s Czech legends KRITICA SITUACE and RADEGAST (included in the five extra bonus tracks different from the original LP version). Ace! (KS)
(Cryptas, cryptasrecs@yahoo.com.mx)

SENSE OF PURPOSE – "Dismantled" CD

Run-of-the-mill modern melodic Bridge Nine-type hardcore from Australia. Gruff shouted vocals, lots of galloping drums, sappy personal lyrics, and weak breakdowns. BANE, CARRY ON and IN MY EYES style HC played with conviction but without much originality or skill. Apparently, this is the band's final release after six years of giving the kids of Melbourne something to stage dive to. (BN)
(Rely On, no address)

SEX/VID – "Tania" EP

"Firm Grasp," the first song on the EP, is a raging and intense jam with an FU's feel. The recording is raw with audible static but not nearly as rough as their first EP. The other stand-out track on the EP, "Tania," is a tightly wound mid-tempo stomper that absolutely will not disappoint. Good stuff. (BS)
(Dom America, PO Box 2066, Olympia, WA, 98507)

SHAM 69 – "United" 2xCD

Only *you* know if you need this double-CD of live SHAM 69. There's no specific information about where and when these songs are from, only that they were recorded live on tour during 1978 and 1979 (probably the band's peak years). Sound quality is pretty good, there's some classic Jimmy Pursey between-song banter (including him putting a stop to several punch-ups), and when the crowd joins in the choruses you can hear them loud and clear. Probably some excellent gigs to have attended, I'm sure. This band had countless classic songs, and most of them are here, from "Rip Off," "Tell Us The Truth," "Borstal Breakout," "Angels With Dirty Faces," "If The Kids Are United," I could go on and on. Can't say I'd necessarily have bought this, but I'm certainly glad it fell into my hands, if you know what I mean… (AM)
(Dream Catcher, www.dreamcatcher-records.com)

THE SHUDDERS – EP

Can these three really make such a racket? By this wonderful EP I'm guessing they can. A primitive Neanderthal thud drives the groove while a heavy scratch (as once done by SILVERFISH) lays dense on the tracks without swamping the hooks, all brought together with some nice sneering vocal attitude. Basic punk with an early New York noise feel, almost conjuring up memories of early SONIC YOUTH and BAND OF SUSANS. This stinks of the late JOHN PEEL circa 1987 and I love it. (SD)
(Compact)

SLAUGHTER AND THE DOGS – "Manchester 101" CD

Wow. This is an incredibly good argument for the forced retirement of tired, pathetic old punks. Perhaps something along the lines of that '70s movie *Logan's Run*? I am not sure that the world needed a SLAUGHTER AND THE DOGS *circa now* live CD. In fact I am going to assert that the world would have been a better place if this CD did not exist. I repeat: A LIVE CD OF SLAUGHTER AND THE

DOGS!! PLAYING NOW! Punk to me is freedom, an idea rather than a sound, and definitely not a redundant old man band cashing in on its so-called "glory years." Listening to the cringe-inducing in-between song banter, the pub rock cover band guitars, the horrible "oi mate nice one"-ness of it all makes me think about how, to some people, punk was just another way to make it in the music biz. This is tame and uninspiring, and it came out on a label called Dream Catcher. Does it get any more bogus? I think not. (LG)
(Dream Catcher, www.dreamcatcher-records.com)

SLIGHTLY LESS THAN NOTHING – "Less Fashion, More Thrashin!" LP

Man, I really wish this was an EP that had maybe five songs on it. Sitting through thirteen songs of goofy, sloppy thrash with *waayyyyyyy* to many different vocal stylings is what I live for on my Tuesday nights. Sarcasm aside, SLIGHTLY LESS THAN NOTHING aren't all that bad at what they do, but I've reached my limit for fastcore with thrash-metal/powerviolence undertones. (NE)
(Inimical, PO Box 2803, Seattle, WA 98111, www.inimical.com)

SLOWMOTIONS – "Dial Eleven" LP

When I first heard this band's *Make Love* single, I was ready to slobber all over them, giving them the crown (then) recently vacated by THE REGISTRATORS as the primo example of Japanese punk genius. It stands up to the best material from that time and place, which if you are a fan of bands like ZYMOTICS or FRANTIC STUFFS or, fuck, even THE KNOCKS, then you know it's a fucking gem. As I'm prone to do, I went apeshit and managed to track down all the other recordings they had, none of which could hold a candle to that single (their fourth). *Dial Eleven* compiles all five SLOWMOTIONS singles and reminds me of the disappointment I felt by them failing to make good after that one classic. Ugh!!! I can virtually guarantee you'll endlessly spin both of those *Make Love* tunes and almost completely ignore the rest. Seriously, the jump in quality is that abrupt. Mind you, the other singles aren't bad by any stretch, and I might still be a fan had I not wigged out so completely by their fourth single. Fuck. If you are normal and can approach things like a rational human being, you'll probably like this. Me? I'm scarred for life. (MC)
(Partners In Crime, 704 NE Dekum, Portland, OR 97211).

SMASH AND GRAB – "Fuck Unity" EP

Raging Aussie hardcore punk with a fucking nihilistic attitude. I believe POISON IDEA had it right when they said "Positive=Boring"—and with songs like "Fuck Unity" and "Pro-Death," I'm guessing these gentlemen would agree. There are some obvious nods to UK protocrust bands like DISORDER, but SMASH AND GRAB pulls from thrash and metal influences as well. I can't say that's normally my thing, but this EP gets the seal of approval based on its vicious intensity alone. Check it out if you're feelin' mean. (CS)
(Bash 'n' Stab, www.myspace.com/sngviolence)

SMOKE OR FIRE – "This Sinking Ship" CD

Okay, this one might get me shunned by all the true hardcores out there, but I don't care. I really like the first song, lyrically and musically. Nothing really makes this stand out from mall punk crap like FALLOUT BOY or SAVES THE FRIGGING BORING ASS LIFETIME RIP OFF DAY, with the exception of an apparent social conscience and one of the hardest hitting drummers I've known, in Mr. Dave "FROM ASHES RISE/NO PARADE" Atchison. Shit like this is designed to be catchy and accessible for a reason and it totally reeks of a "we've grown out of playing real punk and hardcore and wanna make money off music without totally selling out" sentiment, but whatever—it's not my band and they succeeded at their goal. If you are a fan of, say, ALKALINE TRIO or STRIKE ANYWHERE, it's for you. Hell, you probably already have it on your iPod, so read on and stop judging me. This is my review! (JU)
(Fat, www.fatwreck.com)

SPARKLE MOTION — CD

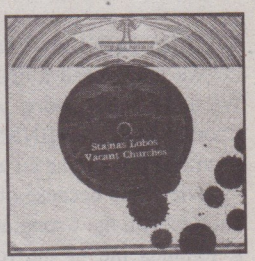
Ah, beautiful punk rock, just when I thought ya went away and died, ya come up again with the goods. Austin's SPARKLE MOTION play that brand of pop that manages to stay tough and rocking, while still maintaining the classic new wave radio hit appeal. THE SOVIETTES dragged around the schoolyard whilst being bombarded with spit bombs, mixed with THE JOYCE MCKINNEY EXPERIENCE without the hairy armpits and tofu scramble. I can dance to this, shower to this, get drunk to this—but I'll still leave BARRY WHITE for the bedroom. Three out of four ain't bad. Winner of the month; brilliant. (SD)
(Super Secret, PO Box 1585, Austin, TX 78767, www.supersecretrecords.com)

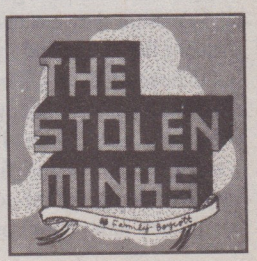
THE SPITS – "2006 European Tour" LP

A drunken splatter of live material courtesy of Death Cult party punks THE SPITS. Although I took a brief reprieve from their moron assault, I must say that I'm once again officially aboard their bandwagon, huff-bag and all. While I would hardly characterize this live album as a required purchase, it does a great job of conveying how loose, fun, and punk this band really is. Plus they've spawned I dunno how many acid-casualty imitators that only serve to make them sound like geniuses. Duhhhh. Unreleased covers of THE KIDS and BLACK EASTER don't hurt things either. Eye-popping neon screen-printed sleeves and tour edition limited hoopla aside, this makes for more than a buy-and-file-away record. Great. (MC)
(P.Trash, www.ptrashrecords.com)

SPRINGTHEMADCAP – "AKA-47 Men" CD

Canadian foursome plying their DILLINGER FOUR-meets-RADON-meets-THE STOCKYARD STOICS brand of the punk rock. Politically charged without preaching or being swamped with clichés, brought together with killer hooks, killer vocals, and killer tunes. I look forward to seeing these boys in a sweaty basement, with a bag of booze, a shitty sound system and my dancing shoes firmly on. Nice. (SD)
(Fight the Mentality.www.springthemadcap.com)





STAJNAS LOBOS / VACANT CHURCHES – split EP

Two well-matched female-fronted bands from opposite sides of the globe. STAJNAS LOBOS from Stockholm play angry, driving punk rock with a tinge of hardcore energy. I'm reminded of VICE SQUAD or maybe even SOFAHEAD. On the flip, Campbell, California's VACANT CHURCHES add some spooky garagey keyboards to the mix and at times remind me of PENETRATION. Good stuff. (AM)
(Vinehell, PO Box 36131, San Jose, CA 95158, www.vinehell.com)

STALINGRAD – "Loseland" CD

Mid-tempo French punk that's kinda rocky. The vocals are in French—as is their website, so I know absolutely nothing about them… This might be their tenth album or their debut. Anyway—it's not bad. (AD)
(Julie, 4 Rue de L'impreniere 34070, Montpelier, FRANCE)

STICK TO YOUR GUNS – "For What It's Worth" CD

STICK TO YOUR GUNS plays metalcore, the type that I guess had its roots in the NYHC scene before it evolved in a more mainstream and metallic direction and way the hell away from anything I might be remotely interested in. As far as I'm concerned, this sounds like a metal band with some awkward RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE spoken moments and melodic singing parts. If you're a fan of open-E breakdowns, double-bass drum acrobatics, and a dude growling in a ridiculously low voice…I dunno what to say about that actually. On the upside, the lyrics do however tackle some real issues like gender and race, albeit along with the usual songs about stuff like, uh, "sticking to your guns." (CS)
(Sumerian, www.sumerianrecords.com)

STOLEN MINKS – "Family Boycott" CD

"We don't need a classroom for class war. We don't need theory, we just need a dancefloor." STOLEN MINKS are an all-girl band from Halifax, Canada. I am sure I was assigned to review this because of the lady band factor, but it hits all the wrong notes—for me, at least. It reminds me of the rock excesses of THE BANGS or THE GOSSIP, the moments when those bands veer into generic bar band territory. I am sure they are also aiming for the retro kicks of the B-52s and in places they get there, but instead of sheer exuberance combined with snottiness, this somehow sounds a little too contrived, like they had a specific band they wanted to ape. I can't figure out who exactly they want to be, but the cover of GINUWINE'S creepy sex jam 'Pony' pushed this from passable effort into the land of novelty and woe. (LG)
(New Romance for Kids, www.newromanceforkids.com)

THE SUBHUMANS – LP

What we have here is a reissue of the second and third releases (on one disc) of what I would argue is Canada's greatest export, THE SUBHUMANS. This appears to be a bootleg, but unlike most, the sound quality is pretty radical. This 12" compiles their debut 12" from 1979 (sometimes referred to as *Death Was Too Kind*), their *Firing Squad* EP from 1980, and their tracks from the *Vancouver Independence* compilation, also from 1980. If you're unfamiliar with these SUBHUMANS, think supercatchy melodic songs with hooks up the yin yang. Maybe like THE UK SUBS or American bands like TOXIC REASONS or a less dark EFFIGIES. There ain't a dog's dick worth of info on this, except where the tracks were culled from, so hopefully I can find it at Amoeba, and you should too. (JU)
(Bootleg, no address)

THE THROBBING PURPLE – "Let It Writhe" CD

I just have to wonder why anyone would name his or her band THE THROBBING PURPLE. What does it mean? Do you get embarrassed telling people? I am sure there's a great story behind it. A rock 'n' roll band with a laid-back singer who leisurely sings the lyrics. He's kind of got a southern drawl, but these guys seem to be from Canada. They cover THE WEIRDOS' "Life of Crime" and seem to barely enjoy it. (CK)
(Sonik's Chicken Shrimp, sonik4050@aei.ca)

TIERRA DE NADIE – "Sordos a la Tierra" EP

TIERRA DE NADIE are from Wisconsin and play full-on crust—we've got the heavy guitars-and-bass thing going on, with throaty vocals and a sliver of metal of course. There are a few melodic moments such as those on the track "Tierra de Nadie." "Human Path" is my favorite song on this EP due to its velocity. I am sure this is the song that gets the crusty skank going at any show. (MS)
(Mundo en Kaos, mundoenkaosrecs@yahoo.com)

TOTALITÄR – "Vi Är Eliten" LP+EP

Alright…I know *MRR* reviewers are prone to hyperbole. *But*—I just wouldn't be tellin' it like it is if I didn't state that TOTALITÄR is the greatest Swedish hardcore band of all time. It's just a fact, ladies and gentlemen, no one does it better. The only question, really, is whether these twenty-plus-year vets can deliver the goods once again on this, their third and final LP—and the answer, to steal a phrase from the erstwhile Bruce Roehrs, is "Fuck yes!" For someone who thought their last couple EP releases were just a bit disappointing, I almost can't believe how great this record is. Monstrous riffs, pounding drums, a crisp, raw guitar sound to *kill* for—and songs so catchy they would make the team at Motown jealous. The goddamn production is so good I seriously want to crank this 'til my freakin' eardrums implode. Whew. OK, in the brief time it takes for me to flip this record once again, I'm gonna make note of the limited mailorder version that comes with a one-sided EP with three re-recorded tracks from their 1986 demo. Done. Now, 'scuse me while I kiss the sky… (CS)
(Prank, PO Box 410892, San Francisco, CA 94141, www.prankrecords.com)

THE TOUCH-ME-NOTS – "It's Not Right But It's Okay" EP

This two-piece husband 'n' wife band appears to be one of the Bay Area's best kept secrets, although the French seem to dig them as well, seeing fit to release this new single, their finest outing yet. The title track is (no joke) a WHITNEY HOUSTON song, yet they manage to up the coolness factor by roughly a gazillion points by reinterpreting it in their own soulful, barebones way. They just do this shit right: fantastic vocals, appropriately fuzzy production...it's just really well executed. Can't say enough good things about this one...check them out if you haven't already. (MC)
(Nasty Product, www.nastyprod.com)

THE TOUCH-ME-NOTS – "Sheldon Munn" 10"

Another fun release from this two-piece, who play minimalist, bluesy garage rock rave-ups and heart-felt country ballads. There's even a SMOKEY ROBINSON cover. (CK)
(Yakisakana, 51 rue Renaudel, 76 100 Rouen, FRANCE, www.yakisakana.tk)

TRASHIES – "LifeSucksTrashFuck" CD

This came out quite a while ago, but better late than never I guess. The Portland, OR band is an unapologetic SPITS rip-off band, though, to give them credit, they manage to out-trash things in a far more lame-brained way. You'll know exactly what's going on here within 15 seconds and things don't change much from tune to tune. If you find THE SPITS too intellectual or something, this is for you. God help you. (MC)
(Mortville, PO Box 4265, Austin, TX 78765)

UK SUBS – "Another Kind of Blues" CD

As a teenager intent on absorbing any and all things punk, I "borrowed" the UK SUBS' first album *Another Kind of Blues* from the HMV in Harvard Square, Cambridge to check out what

I knew to be a well-regarded band. At the time, I remember being disappointed, probably 'cause all the songs didn't sound like "Stranglehold." Now, perhaps I haven't accomplished much in the last ten years since then, but if nothing else, at least I can say that I've gained an appreciation for this fine band. There are trappings of straight rock 'n' roll on *Another Kind of Blues* (chalk it up to Charlie Harper playing music since, like, the '50s or something), but I'll be darned if the tunes aren't as energetic, well-crafted, and solid as anything to come out of England in the late '70s. The SUBS penned a number of classics over the course of their career, and many appear on this album—"CID," "I Live in a Car," "Tomorrow's Girls," "B1C," and the aforementioned "Stranglehold," to name a few. In addition, this reissue includes the band's first three singles as bonus tracks, as well as liner notes, lyrics, and original (if pixilated) artwork. Highly recommended. (CS)
(Captain Oi!, www.captainoi.com)

UK SUBS – "Greatest Hits Live in Paris" LP

Recorded in 1989, this isn't exactly the high point of the SUBS' career, but all the hits are here, along with Charlie Harper's boundless energy. Unfortunately, the sound quality is a bit weak—it sounds like this was recorded in a big hall and as such, a lot of the power of the music is lost. The setlist that night included decent versions of classics like "Stranglehold," "CID," and "Warhead," as well as "probably seemed like a good idea at the time" covers of "Brand New Cadillac", "Roadhouse Blues", and "Back Door Man"—not to mention Charlie's laughable attempt at rapping. Not essential by any means, but not a bad addition to any UK SUBS fan's collection. (AM)
(Released Emotions, c/o PO Box 132, Acton, London W3 8XQ, UNITED KINGDOM)

VACANT CHURCHES – "As I Fall From Grace" CD

Competent and slightly above average—those were my first thoughts upon initial listening of this CD. After a couple more spins underneath the laser, I think that VACANT CHURCHES confirm my initial reaction and don't expand on it. The band plays gothic punk rock that reminds me of something that might be on *Hell Comes To Your House* mixed with later-era SIOUXSIE SUE. The thing that bugs me about it is that it carries more of the theatric feel of SIOUXSIE and less of the frantic feel of that Los Angeles death punk scene. Close, but no cigar. (JF)
(Vinehell, PO Box 36131, San Jose, CA 95158, www.vinehell.com)

VENEREA – "One Louder" CD

This band is from Sweden, but you couldn't tell from listening to them. Total cookie-cutter pop punk/melodic hardcore (think TEN FOOT POLE, PENNYWISE, etc.) ready-made for the Warped Tour. If you like this kind of generic crap, this is really well done for the style. The vocals are less whiny than usual for this strain of mall rock, and the production is as "warm" and "punchy" as it gets. As far as I'm concerned, though, it's artistically bankrupt—it's music built by robots to sell hooded sweatshirts. Enjoy. (AM)
(Bad Taste, Box 1243, 221 05 Lund, SWEDEN, www.badtasterecords.se)

WAR ALL THE TIME / WHOLE IN THE HEAD – split EP

WAR ALL THE TIME features members of the criminally underappreciated band BOXED IN and share some similarities in sound as well, being that they play sharp fast hardcore with a slight crust element which harkens back to the days of RIPCORD and other Euro hardcore bands of that ilk. Their powerful sound is heightened by good musicianship and puts them a cut above most bands. I look forward to more releases from them in the near future. On the other side we have WHOLE IN THE HEAD who plays a bit more tough hardcore but with lots of fast blast parts—yep, powerviolence. They have tradeoff vocals, chaotic guitar work, and overall are really good at what they do. The only problem I have with this record is the art, which doesn't really do anything for me and had I not already known these bands I would have passed up at a record store. Get this one for the music. (WK)
(www.wholeinthehead.co.uk)

WERFUKT – "Massive Cranial Thrash" CD

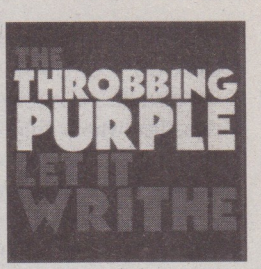
There is a long history of light-hearted/joking thrash bands. Drink, joke, thrash? Silly thrash (can I trademark that?) seems to be returning with bands like MUNICIPAL WASTE, RUMPLESTILTSKIN GRINDER, and this band, WERFUKT, just to name a few. WERFUKT plays speedy raw thrash that doesn't lift too much from bands past, but a good reference point would be CRYPTIC SLAUGHTER. (MH)
(headonfire@msn.com)

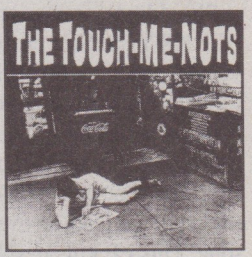
WINTERSWIJX CHAOS FRONT – "Systems Kill" EP

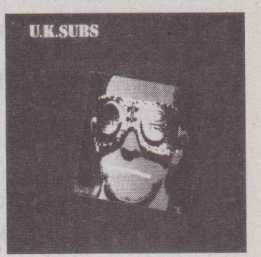
Originally released around '86, this rarity is within radar range of the PANDEMONIUM style, with six hard-driving slices of mid-to-fast-speed hardcore. These tunes have a serious, anarchic edge, and I love the CRASS-like fold-out artwork (done in a cut-and-paste style). WCF didn't cover any new ground, but this is a fairly rare EP that certainly deserves attention, and it's well beyond simply a release for collectors or completists. Check it out. (SS)
(Noise and Distortion, www.noiseanddistortion.com)

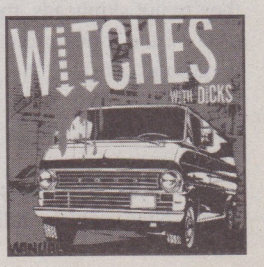
WITCHES WITH DICKS – "Manual" CD

I wonder if this CD was supposed to be called *Manual (Learning To Be a DILLINGER FOUR Cover Band)*. Seriously, WITCHES WITH DICKS sound like they learned to play by listening to DILLINGER FOUR records. I don't mind influences, but this is ridiculous. An alternative title to this CD would be *You Can Steal The Rifts, But You Can't Steal The Talent*. (JF)
(Kiss of Death, www.kissofdeathrecords.com)









WITCHHATS – "Wound of a Little Horse" CD

CIRCUS LUPUS-style art-damaged rock from Australia, with jangly guitars and yelping vocals. The whole thing is meshed out with a Touch and Go Records-circa-1990 recording (produced by a member of the BIRTHDAY PARTY, no less) with a really open studio sound, pegged by a thick bass sound and jagged, rhythmic drumming. The packaging consists solely of various photos of the band in shit-stained diapers or something (I love the place to death, would move there in a second, but honestly…only—*only*—in Australia…), so I have no idea where the lyrics are going. These five tracks, however, are in a style that, despite comparisons, always still sounds fresh and makes for a solid and captivating listen. (KS)

(In-Fidelty, www.infidelity.com.au)

YAKUZA HORROR – "La VI Extincion" EP

Shredding, raw assault from Spain? FUKKK YES! Sick crust spit out by low, gruff vocals trading off with mid-paced high scratchy back-ups. The recording sounds super good as well; the bass is the most prominent instrument on this 7", but he's playing tons of melodies that come off-kilter, and the guitar player has a lead or overdub in almost every song. This EP kills it. (NE)

(Trabuc, PO Box 160, 46740 Carcaixent, Valencia (SPAIN), www.nodo50.org/trabucrecords)

THE YOUNG OFFENDERS - "Trelawny's Army/Angels"

San Francisco's own YOUNG OFFENDERS make their contribution to the thirteenth installment of the Art Of The Underground single series. This is the kind of single that's so damn catchy and raging that after you flip it twenty times, you start to get pissed it's only two songs. THE YOUNG OFFENDERS' style of rockin' punk with killer pop hooks draws from bands like THE JAM, THE CHORDS, and THE BUZZCOCKS, but definitely steers clear of derivative garbage territory. Buy this record because it rules, or to hear what those assholes Tim Brooks and Sean Dougan think is worth putting down on wax after they gave your band such a shitty review. Also, this record contains no pictures of the band, but don't be intimidated if they play your town; they're not skinheads, they're just bald. (BN)

(Art of the Underground, wwww.artoftheunderground.com)

V/A – "Attack of the One-Man Bands!" 2xCD

A massive 58-song collection of one-man bands. Now, you've really gotta love one-man bands like I do to need this much. All garage bands and all very rockin' even when they veer off toward the blues—a good mix of known artists: BBQ, KING LOUIE, MARGARET DOLL ROD, REVEREND BEAT-MAN, KING AUTOMATIC, JOHN SCHOOLEY, some lesser known: MR. BONZ ONE MAN BAND, ROCKET CRAIG, MOSQUITO BANDITO, ESMERELDA STRANGE, JUNIOR DISORDER and a surprisingly amount of Reverends: *Three*. An excellent collection. (CK)

(Rock 'n' Roll Purgatory, PO Box 276258, San Antonio, TX 78227, www.rocknrollpurgatory.com)

V/A – "Choke On It" LP

I'm not a big fan of area-specific comps, as you usually have to wade through a pile of shit to get to the gems, and this Portland compilation is no exception. Don't get me wrong—the gems are certainly on here, like openers the G.O.P., personal faves ABSOLUTE RULERS who still kinda sound like the OBSERVERS, or AUTISTIC YOUTH who still kinda sound like the WIPERS. STRAIGHTJACKET's pogo punk and NIX's KBD gear are great too…however, you have to sift through shite like JUMANJI and MONKEY FUR amongst about a million others to get to 'em. I can't believe there are this many punk bands in Portland (and plenty of great ones too)…wild. If you live there, this rips, if not, there are some good tracks for comps tapes, but I dare you to listen to it all the way through twice. (TB)

(Blind Spot, PO Box 40064, Portland, OR 97240)

V/A – "DC Demos" LP

Stop what you are doing and get to your local record store/internerd portal that is sketchy enough to carry bootlegs and purchase this record, or get one of yr pals to purchase it and tape it from her. VOID *Hit and Run* demo? That should be reason enough to get this, but add to that the first FAITH demo, an '81 ARTIFICIAL PEACE demo *and* DOUBLE-O. I just had this huge conversation about how punk and hardcore shouldn't be just about reverence for the hits of the past; you know, something about how things lose their meaning and become museum pieces. But holy shit—the sound of DC-based adolescent fury circa '81 is just so fucking incredible and incendiary, momentous and disposable. The feeling I get listening to shit like this is the reason I got into punk. I think I actually like the FAITH demo better than their side of the FAITH/VOID split. I mean, the VOID side of that record so clearly blows away anything that could possibly be on the other side of it. But the sound of the FAITH guitar on these recordings is so raw and fucked up and destroyed in the best way; it's fucking exciting and scary and rad. I already have the VOID and ARTIFICIAL PEACE ones on tapes, so I am not totally destructo'd by those in the same way. I mean, obviously, VOID are better than the BEATLES and ELVIS combined, and I do not mean to belittle them or this recording in any way. I guess I am just so blown apart by the FAITH demo I am unable to focus clearly. Really though. VOID, it goes without saying are unmatchable, and this demo is classic like pizza is delicious. (LG)

(It's a bootleg dummy, no address)

V/A – "DC Demos" LP

Another shitty sounding bootleg. Sure, it has something you want: demos from ARTIFICIAL PEACE, VOID, FAITH and DOUBLE O, but geesh we don't have to put up with such bullshit. The person who pressed this on vinyl probably had fifth generation cassettes of this stuff and now you are dishing out $15 or more at the record store for something that sounds really crappy. Download this music off the internet. It's out there and it probably sounds much better. You'll get the demos for free so you can send your $15 to the bands, the people who actually deserve the money. (CK)

(no address)

V/A – "Not Psycho Enough!? vol. 2" EP

Four bands, all doing their tribute to Australian legends THE COSMIC PSYCHOS. First up, LOTHAR, who have managed to outheavy their peers in this tripped-out stoner rendition. Second up, JERRY SPIDER GANG, who take the more direct balls-to-the-wall rock route, which works damn fine for me. Next to the blocks, SPANK MY JONES taking a STOOGES approach to their cover—hand claps and that fuzzed-out lead has me reaching for the winner's bottle of champagne. Congratulations. And finally, keeping up the rear, THE DRY RETCH stays close to the heavy HAWKWIND-syle punk of THE COSMIC PSYCHOS but with a little more vocal play. Great tributes all round to a great band. (SD)

(Dull City, Tueveien 2, 9800 Vadso, NORWAY, gt-john@online.no)

V/A – "Not Psycho Enough!? vol. 3" EP

I have to admit that I was pleasantly surprised when I first threw this on the turntable. I'm not exactly a fan of tribute records and honestly, I haven't heard of any of these bands, but goddamn, does this rock! All four tracks on this slab are loud and raunchy, leaving fans of

whiskey-damaged vocals and walls of guitars wanting more. And whereas the first two volumes of this series had bands from all over Europe, this one features Australian bands only: HELL CRAB CITY, MEAT-BEATERS, INTERSTATER, and GAZOONGA ATTACK. What, you haven't heard of them either? Well's now's the time, as they all pay fitting homage to fellow Australian heavy octane punk lords the COSMIC PSYCHOS. (BG)
(Dull City, Tueveien 2, 9800 Vadso, NORWAY, gt-john@online.no)

V/A – "Pop Punk's Not Dead" CD

Compiled by Dave Parasite, this collection is full of quality stuff. Unfortunately 30 similar tracks are hard to take in one dose. Even more unfortunate is that these are mostly already released tracks. TEENAGE BOTTLE-ROCKET, QUEERS, PARASITES, UNLOVEABLES, ERGS, and so on. Newer bands include THE DAZES and JANEZ DETD. A good start for someone new to RAMONES-influenced punk, if that's possible in this day and age. For a spoiled pop punk vet, I wish this had more new tracks from these accomplished bands to get away from the sampler feel. Also a portion of the proceeds goes to a Multiple Sclerosis charity. Wow, now I feel bad. (RL)
(Go Kart, www.gokartrecords.com)

V/A – "Prae-Kraut Pandaemonium vol. 15" LP

19 tracks in all of rare and not-so-rare ripping psych, garage punk and thumping R 'n' B from the land of good manners, fine beer, buxom girls, and sausage. Included is the USA's very own THE MONKS, though their German connection was well cemented due to their military spell on its soil. Ranging from the almost experimental acid trip of THE JOINT, to the YARDBIRDS-like beat stomp of THE STRANGERS, to frantic soul blues of ANDY NEVISON AND THE HIS RHYTHM MASTERS, and boasting not one filler or a dud amongst its collection. A great compilation worthy of any mop-top, paisley shirt, or Cuban-heeled retro lover. (SD)
(no address)

V/A – "Punk Occupation #5" CD

27-band international compilation out of Russia that features Epitaph-styled punk bands from Germany, Italy, Spain, Israel, Denmark, the UK, the US, and pretty heavy on the Russia. Nothing really stands out…well, the BEVERLY BEER BELLYS stand out in "what the fuck is this crap" kind of way. I'm bummed—I wanted this to be good, or at least listenable, but this shit almost bored me to death. Zzzzzzzz. (AA)
(www.pauki.nm.ru)

V/A – "Punk Occupation #8" CD

An international comp released on a Russian label featuring mostly Russian bands, some bands from Italy, Finland, the Ukraine, Germany, the UK, and uh…AGATHOCLES. The Russian and Ukrainian stuff is mostly spiky-topped street punk of various quality, though there is some hardcore, thrash, and uh…AGATHOCLES on this CD as well. I would tell you what my favorite songs are, but the bands and song titles are in the Cyrillic alphabet. Oh well. Some killer, lots of filler punk comps are not my favorite thing to listen to, but this was cool to check out nonetheless as a fan of world wide punk rock. (GN)
(Crazy Rat, kapkan@infons.ru)

V/A – "Show Em What You Got, California" CD

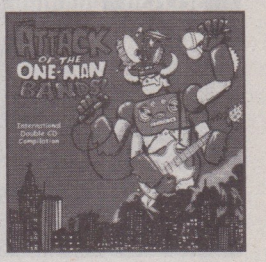
So many times these comps of regional acts fall flat on their faces—too much filler, not enough meat. Fortunately the folk behind Durty Mick Records have taste and an open mind when it comes to their rock 'n' roll. Quality throughout, taking in the ripping ol' school hardcore of KILL NINE NINE, to the amazing STIFF LITTLE FINGERS-inspired punk of THE SORE THUMBS, to the high octane rock 'n' roll of BLACK MARKET RADIO. 24 tracks, too many bands to mention, but the keepers far out weigh the losers, which speaks volumes for a comp. (SD)
(Durty Mick, 19106 S. Normandie Ave., PO Box 311, Torrance, CA 90502, www.durtymickrecords.com)

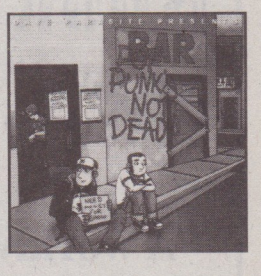
V/A – "Where the Sun Never Sets vol. 1" CD

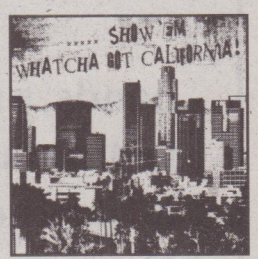
Big comp of melodic/guitar heavy bands who sound like the RAMONES/SCREECHING WEASEL/QUEERS from all over the world. Some of them are known names, like THE RYDELLS, THE PROZACS, THE UNDERHILLS, THE MANGES, and um...THE QUEERS, and plenty of groups I'd never heard of (...the "Nerdiest Band Name Ever" award goes to Switzerland's SLARTY-BARTFAST.) I totally overdosed on this stuff way back in the long-lost '90s and stopped listening to it (except for SW and THE LILLINGTONS of course), but it sounds good to me now, when these days everything is pretty much redundant—this stuff no more than anything else. Bands that stick out are PEA SHOOTER, THE GUTS, THE UNDERHILLS, THE BURBS, THE ADORKABLES, and THE MANGES. I must say that this is a very good compilation; this particular punk subgenre was quite awful there for a few years (I should know—I had to review the crap), but it seems that the cream has risen, the wheat has separated from the chaff etc. etc. and it might actually be worth exploring again. The whole thing is also a benefit for some clean-up-the-ocean group. (AD)
(Cabana 1, www.cabana1.com)

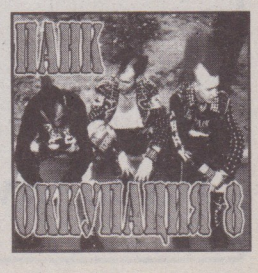
V/A – "You Only Get One Shot at the Big Time: Obscure Powerpop and Punk 1979-1985" CD

A Japanese all-in-one punk/pop comp, featuring the familiar names (to fans of boots and reissues, anyway) M-80s, BLACKJAX, EJECTORS, ZELLOTS and THE STERICS. Putting the word "Obscure" in the title pretty much guarantees they're gonna reach their target audience with this release, most of which will be moderately pleased by the 22 tracks featured here, though not a single stone classic can be found on the entire release. Still..."Obscure" goes a long way. (MC)
(Wizzard In Vinyl, www.wizzard-in-vinyl.com)









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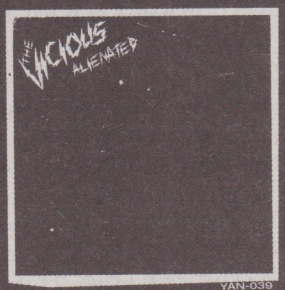

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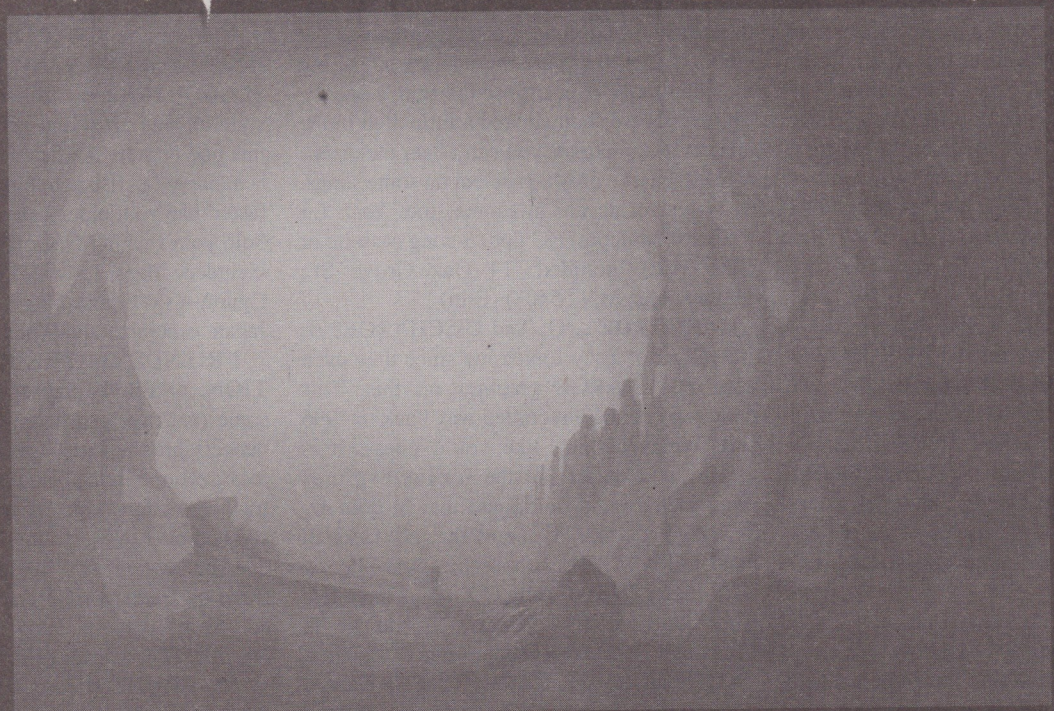

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DEMOS

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A PRIMITIVE AND SAVAGE LAND plays driving and straightforward fast punk rock. The songs include a titch of metal nuances here and there, mostly within the guitar parts. The vocals are screamed and kind of sore-throaty, but keep up with the music well. ($3 ppd. 7-song Cassette, lyrics included. 17 Grand St. #6, Portland, ME 04101) (Erin)

AVENUE ROSE play mid-tempo-ed power pop, a bit tough, and sweet. The vocals are very EXPLODING HEARTS-esque, and the hand-claps and harmonies are there, too. But, it's got more of a first JOE JACKSON record feel to the slower songs. There are four people in the band, but only three in the glossy photo, but I guess that's not really about the demo. Good band, but probably not in the scruffy league for long. (5-song CD, lyrics included. PO Box 2777, Olympia, WA 98507) (Erin)

BEAST FIEND has no drummer, but does create music that is dark and has the feel of a soundtrack. The lo-fi quality to the bass and guitar duo, with the weird vocal effects and what-not weaving layers on top of the music bed, seem like what you may play in your head if you were to have committed some crime which would lead you to drive away from California in the dead of night, *that* kind of soundtrack. Also would fit well at the SPAM Warehouse. (Free. 8-song CD, no lyrics included. 512 14th St., Sacramento, CA 95814) (Erin)

Even though it seems like this is just a promo and not a demo, this **BLACK RADIO** disc rocks fucking hard. Raging rock 'n' roll-influenced high fuckin' octane hardcore. Plain and simple. It says "No Skills" on the back but that's bullshit. These English (I think!) muthas can play. Fuck yeah. I'm sure this will come out in another form so keep your eyes peeled. (4-song CD, no lyrics included. No address) (Justin)

BLANKET OF M plays one mid-tempo and melodic rock song and one slow rock song on this demo. The vocals are well-annunciated singing, almost a kind of crooning, that sits right on top of the music. ($2 ppd/US, $4 ppd/World. 2-song CD, no lyrics included. 11777 Brazos Way, Lindale, TX 75771) (Erin)

THE BUSTLING TOWNSHIPS have their new demo out already, and it's only been a few months. What are teens up to these days? Writing more janky, sweet pop songs, of course! The phenomenon of the massive sing-along, a la olden-days AGAINST ME, has begun at the shows—don't say you weren't warned. Again, the songs are still vocally driven, and the singer's crooning vocal range doesn't quite hit all the notes he's going for, yet it's still charming. Back-up harmonies are more consistent, and just as sweet. (5-song CD, lyrics included. 3527 SE Belmont, Portland, OR 97214) (Erin)

Germany's **CAVE CANEM** play epic down-tuned melodic crust that falls somewhere between FROM ASHES RISE and THE SWARM and they are really good at what the do. Not reinventing the wheel, but who is, right? (9-song cassette, lyrics included. Epistrophy, PO Box 312, 30003 Hannover, Germany) (Justin)

COMPLETE WASTE play awesome well formed hardcore that is totally angry and neither shy nor long-winded about expressing that emotion. Yes, there are momentary solos, but they don't take over or lose the song's energy. The vocals are shouted, and a little high in the mix, as in sometimes you can't hear the drums so well, but it's only a problem on some songs. Back-up vocals are awesome, too. Yeah for Midwest hardcore! ($3 ppd. 5-song cassette or CD, lyrics included. 14 Oak Grove St., Minneapolis, MN 55403) (Erin)

DISCORDE... Q: And DISCHARGE? A: Actually, no. They fooled me since they even used DISCHARGE graphics on this. This demo was actually recorded way back in 1996 and sounds nothing like you'd guess. It is thrashy and crusty but the songwriting uses more melody and quirkiness than it does D-beat raging. Reminds me of that old German band TARNFABRE without the guitar-playing skill. Pretty cool! (5-song CD, lyrics included. Burn Out c/o Phil Kieffer, 2 rue de la Colinette, 51110 Bourgogne, France) (Justin)

THE DRIP and **HEDGECREEP** have a split CD-R of punk rock 'n' roll with an emphasis on the rock 'n' roll. THE DRIP opens up with a riff that sounds like it was pulled right out of the BLONDIE songbook, but they manage to make things better by turning their two songs into punk/rockabilly tunes with lots of '50s-style rock and roll guitar leads and snotty vocals. HEDGECREEP donates one song that is similar but much longer and much slower, which sounds like DEADBOLT but not nearly as funny (in fact it isn't funny at all). (3-song CD, no lyrics included. www.wrecked-em.com) (Pete)

DUNAWAY is not tame, although it is one guy singing and playing an acoustic guitar. Ranting singing over simple guitar parts make the awesome lyrics stand out. ($3 ppd. 21-song CD, no lyrics included. 1357 Macton Road, Street, MD 21154) (Erin)

This also may have been kicking around a while but Japan's **DUST PAN**'s demo rules it. Totally fucking wild, screaming D-beat thrash madness. This band has more energy than two thousand fifth-graders full of Snickers. Rad! DUST PAN has me all "swept up." No. I will not apologize for that pun. (4-song cassette, no lyrics included. takotakotakokun@hotmail.com) (Justin)

You like CRYPTIC SLAUGHTER? Japan's **ESPERANZAVIVA** like CRYPTIC SLAUGHTER too. A blend of DROPDEAD-style blazing crust and grinding thrash metal, this one engulfs the listener in a whirlwind of headbanging, fist-pounding fury. This shit is faster than your older sister was in high school. Solo your fucking face off! (6-song CD, lyrics included. Yugo Touwaki, 6-14-32 Tanimachi Cyuou-ku, Osaka-City Osaka 542-0012, Japan, esperanzaviva@hotmail.co.jp) (Justin)

FRIENDS OF THE RED ARMY FACTION, or FRAF play straightforward punk, some real fast, and some letting the lurching dancers have a turn. The music is kind of a mess, chaotic in the best possible punk rock 4-track recording kind of way, with the lyrics shouted over it, but fitting in. I love the lyrics, and am stoked they included them. Get it. (Free or Trade. 8-song cassette, lyrics included. Woozley Farm, 6265 North St., Halifax, NS B3L 1P4, Canada) (Erin)

Ah, **FRONT PAGE**, could you really not think of anything better to occupy your time than to start another band that sounds like PIEBALD crossed with SAVES THE DAY and singing songs like "Is it over now? Are you back at your house? Am I alone in my

room writing songs about how much I loved you…"? Maybe not actually, because you are doing just that. It may not be my job to decide what's punk and what's not, but it's my review and here, I'm putting my foot down. I'll email you Vagrant's phone number. NOT! (4-song CD, no lyrics included. www.myspace .com/thefrontpagenj) (Justin)

Woah! **GANGLION** is fucking weird as shit! Theatric, blood-boiling, black metal style vocals over mostly clean guitars, thumping bass, and an incredibly talented drummer. I don't think the world is really ready to accept something like this. I certainly wasn't prepared, that's fo' sho'! All this ground-breaking-ness is packaged in a stunning, screen-printed, gatefold CD sleeve. A very, very ambitious project. In due time people are gonna look back on this and say "Holy shit, were they onto something." I know it. (6-song CD, lyrics included. 3332 Hennepin Ave. South #308, Minneapolis, MN 55408) (Justin)

INHUMANE SOCIETY play crusty hardcore, with feeling! It's a mix of metal and punk rock, but without the technical prowess and crazy intense booming recording that has become what one usually hears in these modern times of metal and punk mixing. Good capture of the early crust sound. Vocals are shouted, and shared duty. ($2 ppd. 6-song CD, no lyrics included, but a funny note may be. 830 3rd Ave., Altoona PA 16602) (Erin)

KILLRATIO pumps out some dark, aggressive hardcore/grindcore that only really lacks the person with the really high voice to trade off on vocals. The music has that sort of Northern European black metal feel but in a very punk way. The songs are fast but with a couple short, slow, introspective parts. The bass is very deep while the guitars move between dark lows and crunchy highs. I'm not sure why I listened to all the last 14 minutes of the last song, it's just slow guitar chords, but on the whole they really rock it out. (4-song CD, lyrics included. midnightcadence@ yahoo.com) (Pete)

The NOFX-ness of **LIMBUS** is so right-on that it could put the original out of business. Not exactly but what's a review without some sort of exaggeration, right? This four-piece from Uppsala, Sweden does have this shit down though. Dudes even got the harmonizing chorus parts down pat. LIMBUS just happens to add influences from some "younger" sell-out bands like THRICE or some shit. This band is "slicker" than Rick. Is that what you're into? If so, it's a win/win. (4-song CD, no lyrics included. www.enterlimbus.com or info@enterlimbus.com) (Justin)

THE MUZZLED play thrash-part/mosh-part hardcore! The lo-fi recording quality adds to the basement show like atmosphere of the tape. The vocals are yelled and gruff, but with energy, and "feelin' it." The lyrics they do include are hard to read, but maybe that's just old lady eyes. ($2 ppd. 3-song cassette, lyrics included. 3108 98th St., E, Highland, IN 46322) (Erin)

God bless **NUDE LOAF** for making fun of their own name by calling themselves NUDE LOAF! Ten songs of 1990s Recess Records-sounding gloop. Fun, sloppy, nerdy punk rock. No fancy guitar work. No trickery. Just basic, fun, mid-paced, basement show punk rock. It's a live recording and the fuzz shows but all in all you can make everything out just fine. Word. (10-song CD, lyrics included. 2223 J St., Bellingham, WA 98225) (Justin)

Ah, finally something that attempts to rage! Malaysia's **OSMANTIKOS** drop like a nuclear bomb. Not one of those new lightweight ones. I'm talking the old cast-iron ones. This is four tracks of D-beat crust fallout with an obvious nod to things PDX. Good stuff. (5-song CD, lyrics included. www.geocities .com/bullwhiprecs) (Justin)

RACIN FOR PINKS plays pretty basic up-tempo punk rock with an emphasis on the rock (due to that sort of MOTÖRHEAD influence on the first couple of songs). Three-chord guitar riffs are backed by simple but solid drumming. The vocalist mostly sings with a sort of harsh '80s cock rock inflection but he breaks into screaming at times. The second half of the CD is a little less rock and a little more melodic hardcore. The playing is pretty tight and the recording is good. (4-song CD, no lyrics included. www.racinforpinks.com) (Pete)

I thought this CD-R from Sao Paulo, Brazil's flip-flop clad **RESSURREICAO** was cute, bouncy punk until I realized all the songs praise the big man upstairs. At this point I dive in for closer inspection to find that, yes, the little flyer accompanying said disc reads: "RESSURREICAO Christian band" and the English translation of their song "Punk Rock Cristao" which translates to "Christian Punk Rock" speaks for itself. Ick. I understand that religion/religious organizations help many people out when they're in dire straits, especially in third world locales, but Christianity comes with so many centuries of hate and ideals that I could never, ever look past. Next. (16-song CD, lyrics with English translations included. C/O Silas – Caixa Postal #1771, Sao Paulo, SP – 01059 970, Brazil. disturbiossociais@hotmail.com) (Justin)

SCHEISSE KRIEG plays the modern hardcore style that mixed metal and post-apocalypse sensibilities with good old rage and a merciless tempo. The vocals are screamed from the deep side of the vocal range, and are more spitfire than held out singing style. With only three songs, it's over before you really get warmed up, but leaving the people wanting more is, I think, a good thing. (3-song CD, lyrics included. 99 Custer St., Buffalo, NY 14214) (Erin)

SQUALORA plays metallic hardcore, but adds some cool experimentation into the mix. There are some long, slow moody parts that stand out, and then this rips into total thrash mayhem. Vocals are rage. (6-song CD, lyrics included. PO Box 3311, Portland, OR 97208) (Erin)

SYSTEMATISK TERROR plays thrashy/grungy hardcore songs that fall into the darker side of the color spectrum. They blow through the first eight songs pretty quickly and end things up with a five-minute-plus epic that is still just as intense as their 40-second songs. The songs tend to jump around a lot. One second they are trudging through a heavy slow part and the next they are throwing blast-beats and a wall of noise at you while the vocalist screams like crazy. On the down side, it's a bit sloppy and the recording isn't great. (9-song CD, lyrics included. Flinkenfaltsgatan 1, 46157 Trollhattan, Sweden, falafelpunk@ gmail.com) (Pete)

THRAK is a schizophrenic band, with a dirge personality and a thrash personality. The gloomy slow stuff stays somewhat separate from the blast-beat power thrash. There are two vocalists, as well, with a deep voiced molasses guy, and an aggressive high-pitched toddler-in-a-tantrum guy. (16-song cassette, no lyrics included. 73 Coy St., Homer City, PA 15748) (Erin)

San Francisco's **THE TUNNEL** crash their booze-filled UFO somewhere between MURDER CITY DEVILS, NICK CAVE, the PIXIES, and MIDNIGHT OIL. Dirty, creepy, minimal rock 'n' roll with the swagger of a drunk on a wobbly barstool that's missing two of its four legs. Sexy and stinky. It's the vocals that remind me of MIDNIGHT OIL though. Ouch. Turn them down! I see their vision and so can they, only we both need to lift the binoculars to see it clearly. Sorry. Oh and it's not really punk. (5-song CD, no lyrics included. www.thetunnelsf.com) (Justin)

UNWELCOME GUESTS reminds me of hanging out in Little Rock, Arkansas in the mid-'90s. They manage to mix together all the styles of the bands I remember from there, from the poppy drunken sing-along style, to the slow heartbreak songs, to the country-tinged mid-paced rockers. The songs are sung with heartfelt conviction, and the vocals are buried which adds mystery. (8-song CD, vocals included. 99 Custer St., Buffalo, NY 14214) (Erin)

WEEKEND WARRIOR plays aggressive political thrash. No nonsense, no diluting, just

straight-up spazzed out raging fury—except for the short intros that let you warm up for your pit moves. The vocals are screamed, sparse, and incomprehensible. Thanks for the lyric sheet! ($2 ppd. 5-song CD, lyrics included. 2421 Valley View Dr., Los Angeles, CA 90026) (Erin)

It appears that nostalgia got the better of someone who put out some compilation tapes of bands from Long Island in the '80s and now here I sit with two ***Long Island Hardcore*** CDs of a bunch of bands I've never heard of before. Well that's OK because I happen to love tape compilations and CD captures the poor sound quality perfectly. The two CDs represent most of what was on two separate compilations, *Protection in the Nuclear Age* and *Long Island Hardcore* plus a couple of the bands demos. The compilation includes a couple of pages of pretty interesting info on the bands and what was going on in the Long Island area in the early-to-mid-'80s. Most of the bands play pretty simple punk rock that is similar to early Washington DC/Dischord bands but there is some other stuff in there. This may not be something that you listen to all the time but it is an interesting piece of punk history. (A whole bunch of songs on 2 CDs, no lyrics included. Chump Records, 34 Marlon La Hauppauge, NY 11788) (Pete)

Last up is a compilation called ***Puerto Subterraneo vol. 1*** that was sent in from Chile. From what little I remember from eighth grade Spanish, it appears to me that all of the bands come from the La Quinta region, that I will assume is also in Chile. This comp runs the gamut from the surf jam of LOS VIBRADORES, a later AGNOSTIC FRONT sounding metallic bomb from SIGMA, some random country ditties, some TOOL-sounding schlock, and a whole bunch of heavier metal bands that follow a more "commercial" American sound. Twenty-seven bands in all. The one track that really stood out was by a band called OLOR A LA BANDA and they completely steal the show with a creepy, menacing, spacey punk track that has a LOST SOUNDS feel without coming off at all new wave-y. I'm definitely gonna impress some folks with this track on a couple mix tapes. Worth it alone for this song. I swear! (Justin) (27-song CD, no lyrics included. killingthemusik@gmail.com)

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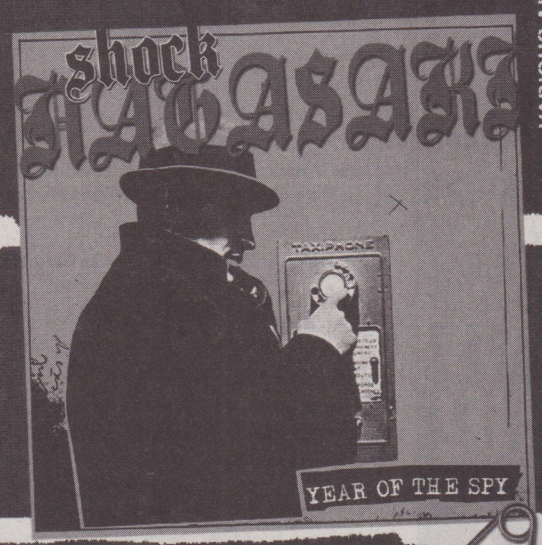

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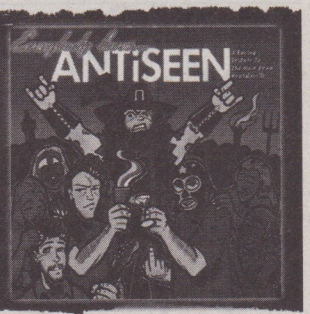

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T.B.A.

Saturday 05 $7
Jason Webley (WA) • Rev. Peyton's Big Damn Band
New Thrill Parade • Evil Wikked Warrior

Friday 11
Far From Finished • One In The Chamber

Saturday 12 $7
Internal Affairs (L.A.) • Trash Talk (WA)
Violation (L.A.)

Sunday 13 $6
5PM SHOW
Clorox Girls (OR) • Red Dons (OR) • Sex Tape Scandal

Friday 18
California Love • Drain The Sky (Record Release)
Jesusfuckingchrist

$2 YEARLY MEMBERSHIP
ALL SHOWS ARE ALL-AGES
ALL SHOWS START AT 8PM (UNLESS NOTED)
ARRIVE AN HOUR EARLY TO VOLUNTEER
NO VIOLENCE, DRUGS OR ALCOHOL
NO RACIST, MISOGINIST, OR
HOMOPHOBIC BULLSHIT.
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SIX TWO FIVE

OUT WINTER/SPRING-2007:
THIS IS MY FIST/GIANT HAYSTACKS
Split 7" Bay Area angst ridden punk
CHARM / UG MAN - Split LP
Hyper-manic Tokyo thrash punk
CRUCIAL SECTION/HIT ME BACK-EP
Split of flannel-induced thrashcore
BANDANOS/DESTRUCTIONS END-CD
Split CD of 80s crossover madness
50/50 - Debut EP
Gulf coast skate-violence, ex-MGR
CALIFORNIA LOVE - CD
Brutal Bay Area Grind-violence
BxUxSxH - LP
Brazilian JFA style '81 skate punk
V/A - Trapped in a Scene LP
US/Canadian Fastcore Mayhem
SEVERE - Demo EP
Brutal Ohio-violence. Lmt to 500.
ENDLESS BLOCKADE/WARZONE WOMYN
Split Lp:Death to weak powerviolence
V/A-Bay Area Thrash Detonation
Limited LP/CD of local fastcore
SLIGHT SLAPPERS - Tomorrow LP
2nd LP:Tokyo power viuolence legends
APARTMENT 213 - 1993-97 CD
90s raw Clevo power violence
BREAKFAST "3rd and Army" LP
2nd LP-ballistic Tokyo skate-thrash
INSECT WARFARE -Endless Ex.CD
Blasting grind-CD w/EPs,Split,Demo
SOCIETY OF FRIENDS - Coll CD
Manic Texas HC from late 90s
SECOND OPINION - CD
Fast-High Energy thrash, EP,demo,live
BARBARIC THRASH CD COMP SERIES
Digipak CD comps - Euro, Japan, Cali.

STILL AVAILABLE:
KUNGFU RICK 2xCD -Insane Grind Collection
JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS LP:Everything on 1-LP
FINAL DRAFT/ARM split EP - Socal Fastcore
CRUCIAL SECTION-2nd LP:Tokyo 80s thrash
MINDLESS MUTANT-EP:Brutal Blast-Violence
KNUCKLESCRAPER-Debut EP:GC powerviolence
SHANK-LP/CD: 1000mph ned-violence
DISCARGA-10" LP:Brazilian LARM style HC
THEY LIVE-LP: Now classic NY fastcore
I SHOT CYRUS-LP: Brazilian fast attack
I DONT CARE/QUILL-Split CD:Tokyo Fastcore
BLOODY PHOENIX-EP: Grinding blastcore
MACHINE GUN ROMANTICS-CD: GC fastness
LORDS OF LIGHT-EP: 3-man grind explosion
CHARM-Shikami EP: Tokyo hyper Distort.
IRON LUNG/SHANK-Split CD: Split-violence
Mosh Circle Jerk Punks Comp LP:
w/RAZORS EDGE, TOMORROW, IDOL PUNCH, plus more
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VOETSEK/CONGA FURY/CHAINSAW Split 10"LP
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ZINES

Reviews by: Julia Booze (JB), Paul Curran (PC), Cassie Harwood (CH), Chris Hubbard (CS), Nick Mangel (NM), Jeff Mason (JM), Golnar Nikpour (GN), Casey Ress (CR), Andy Shoup (AS).

Send zines for review to: MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed?, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, email address.

A BEAT OF OUR OWN #2 / $2 US, $3 Can/Mex, $4 World, or Trade
8.5 x 11 – printed – 40 pages

This is a very cool newer zine that has a mix of punk/HC stuff (old and new) and that lovely cut and paste underground feel, despite being on newsprint (color cover even!). Lots of cool old punk flyers in the background too (obligatory for cool zines!). This issue has interviews with Social Unrest, CH3, Jae from APPLE, The Maggots, Penelope Houston, The Hated, Thought Crime/Distraught, and a very cool Philippines scene report. Excellent! Get your copy! (NM)
Jared / 123 B Park Ave / Raleigh, NC 27605
misenplace2@hotmail.com

BEHIND THE SMILE #0 / Trade
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 12 pages

First issue of this zine from France. It's about half English, half French in content. Pretty cool interview with the Subhumans (CAN), Defect Defect, plus some reviews, etc. Good standard cut and paste punk rock fare here, I would love to see it expanded to be bigger. This issue is out of print already, so I guess write for the next one? (NM)
gopaperboygo@hotmail.com

BITE THE HAND THAT FEEDS THE POISON FOOD #4 / €3 ppd
5.75 x 7.75 – copied – 40 pgs

About half of this is given over to detailing the editor's band's two-week European tour. They eat very well—I guess this is par for the course over there, but I was amazed. Our narrator has access to copious amounts of intoxicants as well. If you are sick of tour diaries, this one won't change your mind, as it's pretty standard for the genre. He also includes a series of reflections on the role of protest in making a society worth living in. Reviewed are zines and records he finds rad, crusty metal shit. Interviewed are Guided Cradle and Abandon (from Sweden). Some of the dudes in Guided Cradle do not have a language in common, so one poor guy ends up translating all the time. In terms of quantity, there is a lot of writing in here, and the editor invested time in jazzing up the (proud-to-be-) cut-and-paste layout with lots of photos (the grainy photocopied kind, my favorite), graphics, etc. There are no ads. I wanted to like this more than I did, but none of the writing or stories are really exemplary. I hope to check out future and past issues, as the editor has access to free photocopying at his job. (JM)
Cormy / 45 Beech Hill Drive / Donnybrook / Dublin 4 / Ireland

BRAINSCAN #21 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 44 pgs

I want to start by saying what I would normally save for the last sentence of a review: I highly recommend this zine. That needs to be stated first because the description of this zine might lead readers to pass it off as one of those way-too-personal post-riot-grrrl feminist zines calling some boy out for being a dickhead. I don't know if this is a universal phenomenon, but in Portland, where this zine happens to be from, there was a short-lived but intensely polarizing heyday for that sort of zine in the mid-'90s. There was even a new term coined, where the allegedly dickheaded boy (or sometimes a girl) is said to have been "zined." In one respect, the subject of this zine, the thinly disguised "J," can be said to have been zined. But the true subject of *Brainscan* #21 is the writer herself, Alex, who wrote this as a way of working through the pain of ending a six-year-long relationship. Alex paints a plain yet detailed portrait of a relationship where one person uses his ideology and his status in the scene as devices for control and psychological abuse. Alex does not use the word abuse lightly. As a matter of fact the word never even appeared in this zine's original incarnation. It was only after readers pointed out to her that what she experienced was in fact a form of abuse that she came to recognize it as such. I get very uncomfortable reading about suffering of any kind and was afraid that at some point this zine get too intense. But Alex manages to describe the intricacies of this dysfunctional relationship without being emotionally overwhelming, and creates a narrative that kept me engaged to the very end. I recommend this to anyone who cares about power dynamics in the scene and in relationships, anyone who may be in an abusive relationship (physical or psychological) or knows someone who is, and most importantly in my eyes, anyone who may be an abuser or

the controller in a relationship. That adds up to just about everyone, probably. (PC)
Alex Wrekk / 809 N Shaver St. / Portland, OR 97227
alex@smallworldbuttons.com

THE BROADSLIDE #6 / $2
8.5 x 11 – copied – 20 pgs

The Broadslide seems to be a side project from the writer of *The Trouble With Normal* zine. This zine focuses on political writing with a pretty mainstream liberal bent. There's a longer article on the tactics of social conservatives in American politics (reprinted from *The Trouble With Normal* #76), as well as a few less insightful blog-style articles, like one about a heckler at an anti-war demo and one about people who still have their "Bush '04" bumper stickers. The highlight of this zine is the reviews section, which covers a wide range of music from Clit 45 to Mecca Normal to the Coup to Willie Nelson, with longer and more in-depth reviews than you'll find in your average music zine. (PC)
PO Box 1444 / Columbia, MO 65205-1444

CASH FLAGG #3 / $2
8.5 x 11 – copied – 8 pgs

Yay for funny shit. This li'l number is entirely worth keeping around the coffee table or toilet. I can't tell if Brian always only reviews movies because the subtitle is "…movies and stuff…" If he reviewed a shoelace, I'm sure it would be well examined, with gleeful taunts, acclaim, or scathing disdain. And I don't even like watching movies! Puts my job to shame. (JB)
Brian Marshall / PO Box 1004 / Danbury, CT 06813-1004
cashflagg13@hotmail.com

DEATH PANGS #666 / $2 ppd
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 28 pgs

I must have somehow missed the preceeding 665 issues of this Northwest zine, but this one's very well done. Coverage is pretty exclusively metal, but of the independent DIY variety with a good deal of crossover into the punk scene. The interviews, with Portland, OR show promoter Nate Carson, Manium Warehouse organizer Nathan Weaver, and the bands Dhoom/Demon Fetaal Harvest and the Horde, are mostly not in the typical Q&A style, but rather written as articles. There is also a piece on the "Top Eleven '80s Thrash Metal Albums" and brief Portland scene report, as well as photos and a good deal of artwork throughout. The author's eye for cut 'n' paste style layout is well above average, and her enthusiasm for her subjects are nicely evident in her writing. Check this one out if you wanna stay on top of the NWONWM ("New Wave of Northwest Metal"). (CS)
RF / 2330 Haines Street / Port Townsend, WA 98368
deathpangs@hotmail.com

DIG IT #39 / 4.50€
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 44 pgs – French

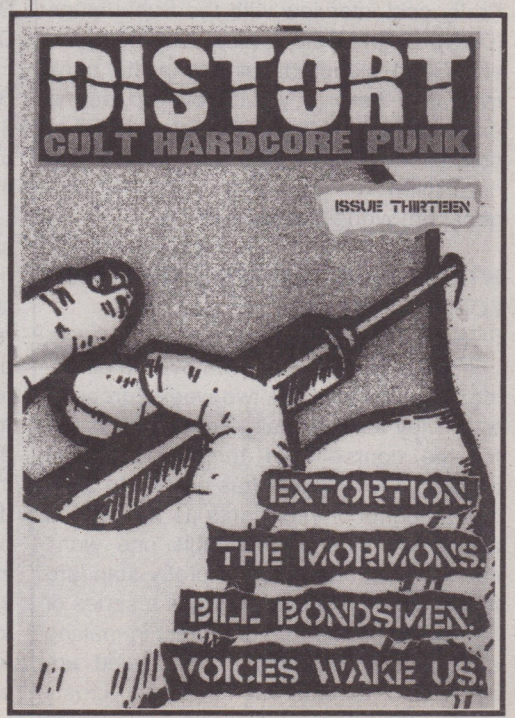
This French language garage rock 'n' roll zine keeps growing and improving. Issue #39 has *beaucoup* record reviews, as well as a bio on Ronnie Bird, and interviews with The Fuzztones. psych-rock archivist Patrick Lundborg, and the Bay Area's own Tina Boom Boom. You dig garage rock, you speak French, you buy this zine, dig it? (PC)
Armadillo / 32 Rue Pharaon / 31000 Toulouse / France
www.chez.com/digitfanzine

DISTORT #13 / $10 for 5 issue subscription or $3 per issue
8.5 x 11 – copied – 16 pgs

I reviewed this Aussie hardcore/punk fanzine a few issues back and gushed about it in a way I don't usually for zines. The truth is, the editor of this zine, DX, is an immensely compelling writer who has loads of style and personality, and whose enthusiasm for his material really gets under my skin. It never really happens that I read writing about rock 'n' roll that has even one iota of the bash-my-head-against-the-wall pure energy that rock 'n' roll itself has, but *Distort* is funny and sarcastic and negative and powerful in all the right ways, and has easily become my favorite punk fanzine currently going. Even the interviews (with Detroit's Bill Bondsmen, Clevo's pre-Nine Shocks outfit the Mormons, and Australia's Extortion are far above average, and the reviews and DX's writing about cult hardcore and punk is legitimately excellent. Highly recommended; get into it. (GN)
DX / PO Box 239 / North Carlton / NC 3054 / Australia

DOLL #236 / $?
7.5 x 10 – printed – 140 pgs – Japanese

This long-running Japanese glossy is, as always, fun as hell to look through (though I can't read it at all) what with its features and photos of old punk bands (like Canadian cover models the Modernettes) and its extensive ads for current Japanese records and rarities. The feature on early '80s Canadian power pop/punk (i.e. the Pointed Sticks, the 222s, and the aforementioned Modernettes) is cool and has some great pics, and there are also features on the Queers, Celtic Frost, and the Stranglers among others. A nice treat for a bus ride as always, and a good way to trick the people around you into thinking you read Japanese. (GN)
No. 303 Aota Bldg. / 3-1-9 Kita Kohenji Suginami-Ku / Tokyo / Japan



EMOTIONAL POVERTY #5 / free as fuck
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 20 pgs

There are too many unfinished thoughts in this "journal of radical subjectivity" for me to wrap my brain around it. Though there is a name attached to the intro, the writing feels anonymous, with the pronoun "we" throughout, to be interpreted as a group of people collectively operating as RAAN (Red and Anarchist Action Network). I find this detachment incredibly annoying. Still, there is definitely a considerable amount of careful intention in the writing, with plenty of room for readers to take whatever they can from it. Clearly the author of these guiding topics intends it as a jumping off point to a larger discussion (already ensuing across tables and messageboards alike) and not as any kind of end or "official story." (JB)
Liberation Projects / 838 E. High St. #115 / Lexington, KY 40502
www.redanarchist.org

FALL OF AUTUMN QUARTERLY #2 / $?
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 12 pages

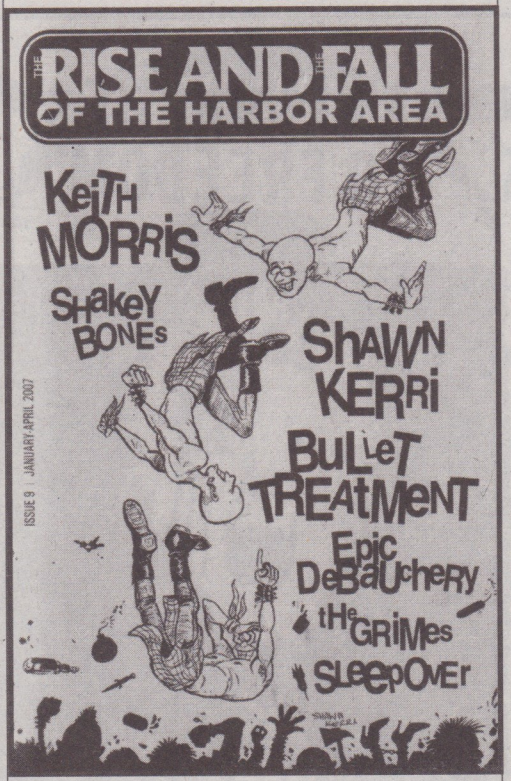
This is sort of a combined newsletter/zine for the zine distro by the same name, so it's got some mixed content. Half of it is a well-written article about basically why and how to publish your own zine, Some miscellaneous short writings, and a catalogue of some titles they distribute. Definitely a cool DIY item. (NM)
PO Box 254 / Manhattan, IL 60442

FRANTIC CITY #00 / $?
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 36 pages

Even though this is issue #00, it's the second issue (first was, you guessed it, #0!). Very well done fanzine in the real sense of the word, all about '70s punk rock, both KBD style and better known stuff. A lot about reissues, etc. Mainly though, this is interviews with some of the classics: Avengers, Gears, Lurkers, Fast Cars, Vectors, Penetrators, Zero Boys, PVC, Unnatural Axe, and Rave Up Records. Hard not to like! (NM)
31 Rue A. Barine / 17000 La Rochelle / France

HUB CITY OUT OF THE BASEMENT #1 / $2 ppd
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 28 pgs

Very cool little zine, the expressed purpose of which is to cover the New Brunswick, NJ scene. While it would be easy for a zine with an exclusively local focus to be totally irrelevant to an outsider, *Hub City* deals with issues in such a way that any punk can relate. Laid out in a simple cut 'n' paste style, this debut issue has artwork, photos, brief show reviews, writing on venues being closed and a corrupt NJ development corporation—but the majority of the zine is a long and very well done interview with New Brunswick's premier pop punk band The Ergs. Well worth picking up. (CS)
Jarrett D / PO Box 1561 / New Brunswick, NJ 08903
jarrett_d_@hotmail.com



HUNTSVEGAS #2 / **NO FUNERAL** #3 / Free
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 16/12 pgs

Huntsvegas #2 turned into *No Funeral* #3. Mini hardcore zine put out with the intention of giving you solid and straightforward interviews/articles about punk and hardcore. First issue has interview with Insect Warfare from Texas. Second issue has an interview with In Disgust and talks about the relevance and popularity of vinyl today. (CH)
Brian Cook / 555 Bowers Blvd. #230 / Huntsville, TX 77340

HUSH #1 / $2 or trades
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 36 pgs

"Art zines" can be a little difficult to review—often because they're not terribly good. *Hush* is actually quite good, but again difficult to put into words. It is a stunning collection of drawings from flyers, zines, and covers he's worked on over the past years—at least some of which you're guaranteed to have seen at some point gracing your local record store or venue. The drawings are beautifully grotesque, stark illustrations of skulls, rat, and monsters, with a slight Rudimentary Peni feel to them. No words, lots of illustrations, worth the price, and quite enjoyable. Thanks for putting this together. (CR)
Hush / PO Box 2271 / Asheville, NC 28802

MINDLESS MUTANT #2 / $3
8.5 x 11 – copied – 56 pgs

A high quality effort from start to finish. This is the best hardcore zine I've gotten for review since *The Big Hurt* last year. A wealth (56 pages!) of writing, interviews (Punch in the Face, Black SS, Merkit, Hit Me Back, Go!, and a reprint of Poison Idea from *Flipside* #64), reviews, and great photos—all expertly laid out in the classic punk cut 'n' paste style. Absolutely top notch. A thick zine that is *well* worth a measly $3. (CS)
Matt Rolland / 3108 98th Street East / Highland, IN 46322
RattMolland8@aol.com

NARCOLEPSY PRESS REVIEW #1 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 20 pgs

Twenty pages chock-full of zine reviews, personal anecdotes and "interesting" things that the editor has clipped from the newspaper. Dude, I'm reading a zine that reviews zines and writing a zine review for that zine, all while thinking about my own zine. Help me, I'm trapped in a zine vortex! (AS)
PO Box 17131 / Anaheim, CA 92817

OX FANZINE #70 / $?
8.5 x 12 – printed – 132 pgs

Okay, so this is a magazine. It's glossy. It covers all the bases, as it were, reviewing the likes of Converge, Mike Patton, Defiance, Ohio, Dead Moon, the Shins, and Billy Childish. There's something in it for everyone, apparently, but (I almost forgot): you have to be able to read German. If this one were in English, I'd go to the magazine store, read the Dead Moon article, and be done with it. Comes with a CD. (AS)
PO Box 10 22 25 / 42766 Haan / Germany

THE RISE AND THE FALL OF THE HARBOR AREA #9 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 – printed – 60 pgs

This is a great zine out of San Pedro. Seriously, this is a *great* zine out of San

Pedro. Gotta say one of the coolest zines I've seen and *definitely* one of the coolest zines I've gotten for review. Besides having a totally professional layout and quality, this issue is full of killer ass shit! The famous skankin' Circle Jerks dude that everyone knows and loves? This girl Shawn Kerri drew it and *The Rise and The Fall* printed an awesome collection of her punk flyer art...most of which you will probably recognize, along with a sorta bummer story about where she ended up. Also! Interview with Keith Morris, Shakey Bones (from the Bay!), Bullet Treatment, The Grimes, tons of pictures, comics, reviews, skateboard shit, and more! The zine is distributed free around the SoCal area. (CH)
PO Box 1794 / San Pedro, CA 90733
info@theriseandthefall.com

SEVEN INCHES TO FREEDOM #4 / $1 or trade
5 x 8.5 – copied – 34 pgs
This thing is pretty fun. First, the price is as right as it's gonna get. Second, he gets a lot of contributors to kick in stories that every kid can relate to, like "your first record," or "top five non-punk records." Not all contributions are equally captivating, of course, but the combination of good writing, enthusiasm, and nostalgia makes for enough good stuff to put a smile on my face. Of course there are reviews, along with a piece on Enemy Soil, and some tips for touring. The editor is more liberal here than I am, as I think bands ought to stay home until they're fucking good, but what can you do, people are selfish. Anyway, yeah, this issue is worth the asking price. (JM)
Joe Lachut / 2163 Hoople St. / Ft. Myers, FL 33901
hiszeroisgone@yahoo.com

SKETCH STANCE #3 / $?
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 20 pgs
We call this one a DIY coloring zine—14 different illustrations with a quote from a song on each page that may or may not have anything to do with the illustration. Not amazing, but interesting enough. Contact him for the price. (CR)
Sketch Stance / Flat 3 / 9 Parkfield Road / Liverpool / L178UG / UK
Sketchstance.co.uk

START BY WALKING #1 / Free
5.5 x 4.25 – copied – 40 pgs
Oops... I hate when this happens... Sometimes people accidentally drop their boring diaries into a photocopier and then somehow they get sent to us for review. I know the person who wrote this never intended for other people to read in great detail about his passion for mason jars and his four friends named Caitlyn. Well, at least he didn't write about anything interesting enough to tell anyone about. Don't worry though buddy, your secret diary is safe with me. If I find any more copies I'll be sure to hide them in a place where no one will ever find them. Hopefully ever. So, to all the "zine writers" out there: If you're gonna send me your diary by accident, please at least make sure it's full of juicy gossip about things like scandal and revenge!! (CH)
Chandler C/O Rebecca / PO Box 158 / Indianola, WA / 98342

STORM WARNING! #52 / $15 for two-year sub (# of issues may vary), free to prisoners, homeless, and unemployed veterans
8.5 x 11 – printed – 16 pgs
This publication focuses on present and past members of the military who are opposed "to any wars... by the US and all imperialist powers." The reports on the status of people in the military who are refusing to serve in or return to Iraq differentiate this paper from others disgusted by the Bush administration and the general populace of this country. Also included is an article describing anti-aircraft tactics used by insurgents in Iraq, and a piece on a joint Israeli-Palestinian veterans' peace movement. On the page with their opening editorial, they include a sidebar noting that this issue came out considerably behind schedule, and they include a graphic of a pot leaf! Ain't no shame in their game... (JM)
VVAWAI HQ / PO Box 21604 / Seattle, WA 98111-3604
www.vvawai.org

TEMPORARY RELOCATION PROJECT #1 / $3
3.5 x 6 – copied – 96 pgs
New style of zinage from Shawn Granton, of the comic *Ten Foot Rule*. This shift to writing probably won't disappoint you if you've followed his other projects; it still has the gracious sort of personal tales, and he didn't leave drawings out entirely. It is about going from Portland to Conneticut and back again, partially on a bicycle. A little slow, with emphasis on the experience of going through cities too quickly to really experience them. I looked forward to his illustrations. (JB)
Shawn Granton / PO Box 14185 / Portland, OR 97293

WARNING #4 / $3 US, $5 world
8.5 x 11 – printed – 32 pgs
Featuring an interview with *Why?*-era drummer Bambi, the fourth issue of *Warning* continues to provide the most comprehensive Discharge coverage available in print today. What's good is that the questions are informed and the discussion held my interest. Also decent are the other talks, with Effigy, Persevere, Acrostix, Zyanose (these four Japanese) and Canada's Germ Attak, who discuss how the Canadian government, despite its support of punk zines, used hysteria from 9/11 to expand police powers and detain people without trial. There are no ads or reviews, but there are a lot of photos, most of which look pretty good. There is some political writing as well, delving into the background of American Defense Secretary Robert Gates and the ubiquity of surveillance in

modern society. While number four isn't quite as strong as the previous issues, I would still buy it for sure. (JM)
PO Box 40113 / Portland, OR 97240-0113

WE'RE GONNA FIGHT #9 / $?
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 48 pages

"International political vegan SXE" zine from France. Cool in theory with plenty of coverage of punk/HC from all over the world, this issue has interviews with Ekidad, Solaridad, Azko Social (Peruvian bands), Tuberculoses, Anarko punk and HC (Bolivia), Boshet Records (Israel), and the awesome Total Banxat (Indonesia). Plus extensive scene reports from Yogyakarta, Indonesia, etc. The editor travels extensively and has a lot of first hand info about these scenes with this issue focused a lot on South America. Credit definitely given where it is due. Unfortunately the editor, as such prominent reviewers as yours truly have noted (I reviewed his last issue), has a shitty analysis of "political" issues he deals with in the zine. I guess I really ticked him off because he wrote all about it in this issue. He complained about Indonesian punks who criticized him for his shitty condescending attitude (which I remarked was pretty understandable). He says he doesn't feel responsible for anything France did "while I wasn't even living," then he says "Hey you punks in Indonesia/Philippines, don't criticize what France did in Africa for so many years, your country is a colonialist one!" And that's the least of it; I won't get into some of the other shit. Yeah, we here at *MRR* lambast the US empire, society and bullshit Christianity (as he pointed out), because that's where we come from and that's what we experience firsthand. It's our job as punks in this country, as I see it. Let the punks from their respective areas use their voice to give their own opinion on their situation—they don't need some foreign white dude speaking for them. This guy is gonna need the fuckin' jaws of life to pry his foot from his mouth and I ain't about to lend a helping hand. Wasted potential. (NM)
8 Crs Gambetta / 169007 Lyon / France
xwfgx@yahoo.fr

WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH YOUR MOM'S SOFA? #? / $?

Okay, this is a good idea for a zine: focus. Instead of meandering all over creation, preaching your half-baked sermon to the converted, why don't you make a zine that's about one thing that you know how to do well? You can do a guide of sorts, and your odds of success as a zine are *astronomically* higher. Try it! In the case of this zine, the editor has done a guide to making pillows and quilts from old t-shirts. Not a bad idea. You can have your friends over, and point at a throw pillow and say, "see, I made that from a t-shirt I was wearing when I took acid for the first time". Or something. Anyway, I think the one-topic zine is an awesome idea and this is a perfect example of how it can be done. (AS)
3325 N. Nellis #25 / Las Vegas, NV 89115

YOU DON'T GET THERE FROM HERE #2 / $2
5.5 x 4.25 – copied – 36 pgs

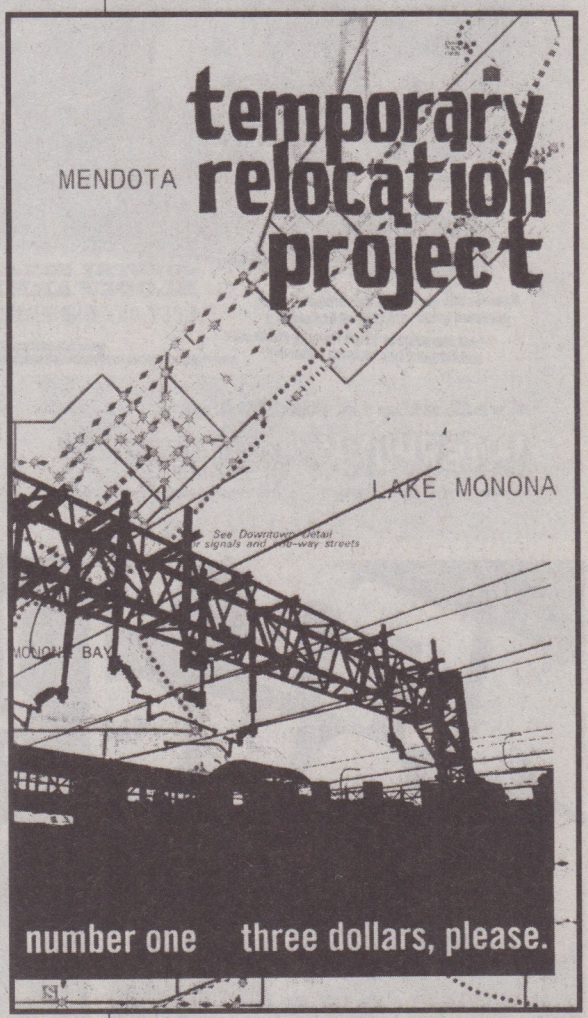
I reviewed the last issue of this zine, which was and still is a little comic diary about the artist's day-to-day life. She seemed *reaaaallly* depressed in the last issue and I told her to feel better or something like that. Getting out of a bad depression can be a lengthy and tedious process. I can definitely see that happening here... Every daily comic strip shows the artist going for a run, trying to eat her vegetables, hangin' with her cats, and trying not to drink too much beer. Makes for a pretty redundant read, but it's a zine about life and life can get pretty fucking redundant. Gives you hope nonetheless... Gotta keep on keepin' on, and keep on makin' comics... (CH)
Carrie McNinch / PO Box 49402 / Los Angeles, CA 90049
cmcninch@gmail.com

ZINETOPIA #2 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 20 pgs

Okay, let me get something straight with the zinemakers of the world: I do not care what you were listening to when you made your zine, and you are not scoring any points with me by sharing that info, *especially* if you were listening to Lauryn Hill or Flogging Molly. Now that we have that out of the way, *Zinetopia* is a small zine with mostly zine reviews, pretty good ones, and an interview or two, as well as an article entitled "Zines and Prisons." (AS)
PO Box 38 / Bluefield, VA 24605

ZINE WORLD #24 / $4
8.5 x 11 – printed – 48 pgs

Zine World has survived and evolved over the years to be one of the most useful tools for zine editors, writers, and readers. Beyond the exhaustive review section, they devote a significant section of their zine to other helpful resources such as mailing rates and tips on printers and distributors, as well as a highly interactive letters section. This month's issue includes news on the increasing challenges facing zines including the recent folding of The Independent Press Association, the end of *HeartattaCk* and *Clamor* magazines, and the impact of Tower Records going belly-up. Sadly, the shifting focus of virtual, rather than printed material doesn't seem to bode well for zines in general. Here at *Maximum* I've seen the number and diversity of zines coming in for review drop lower and lower. Zines like *Zine World* continue to promote and encourage independent media, and for that, deserve our support. (CR)
PO Box 330156 / Murfreesboro, TN 37133
www.undergroundpress.org



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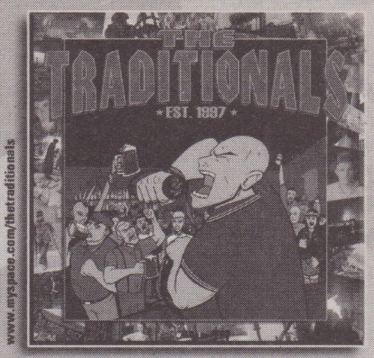

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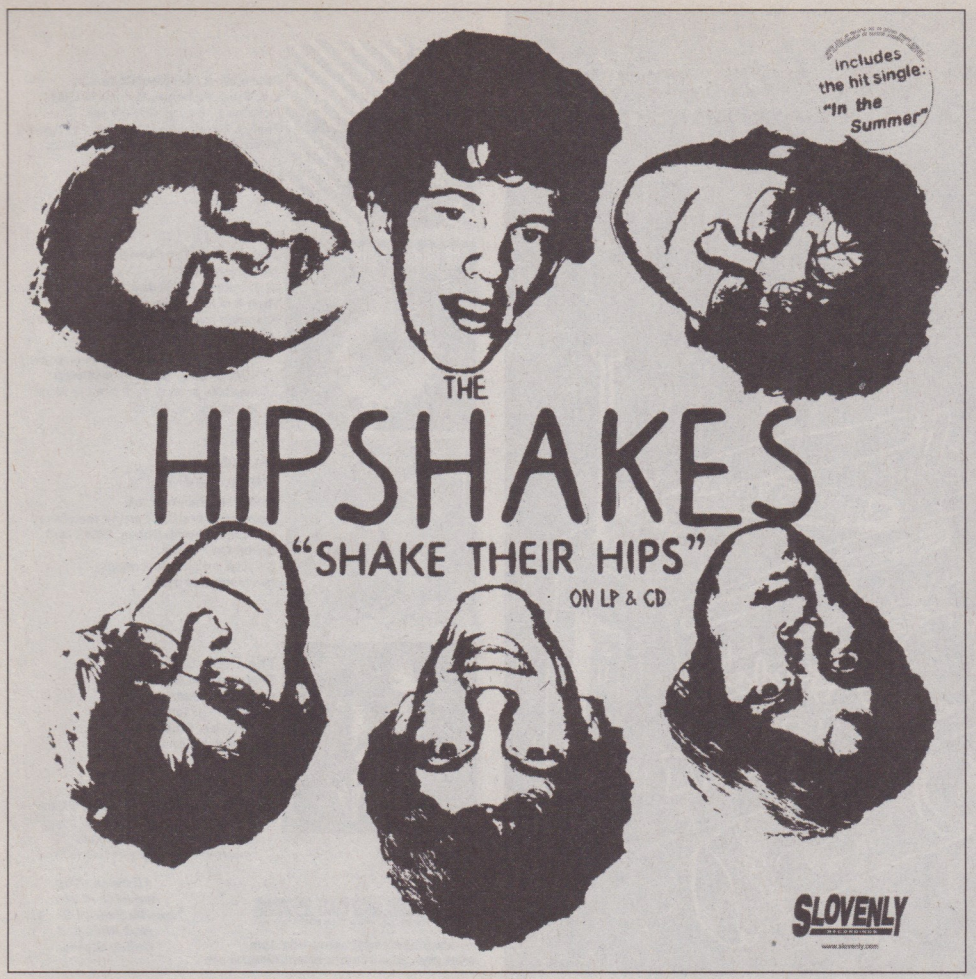

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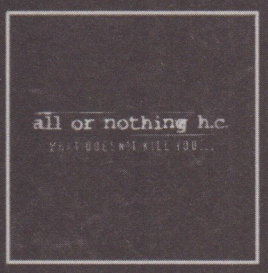

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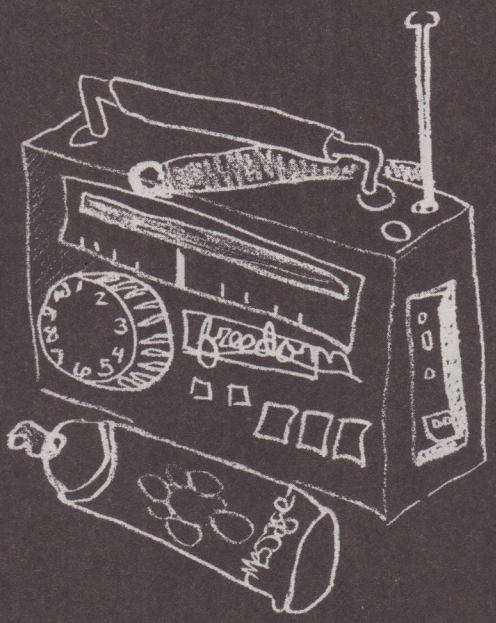

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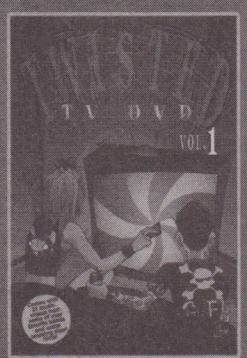

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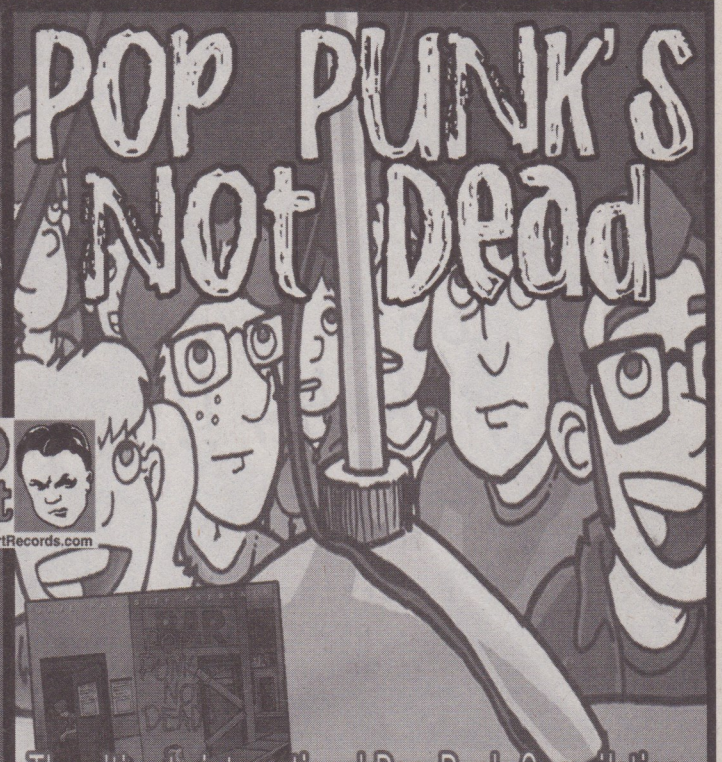

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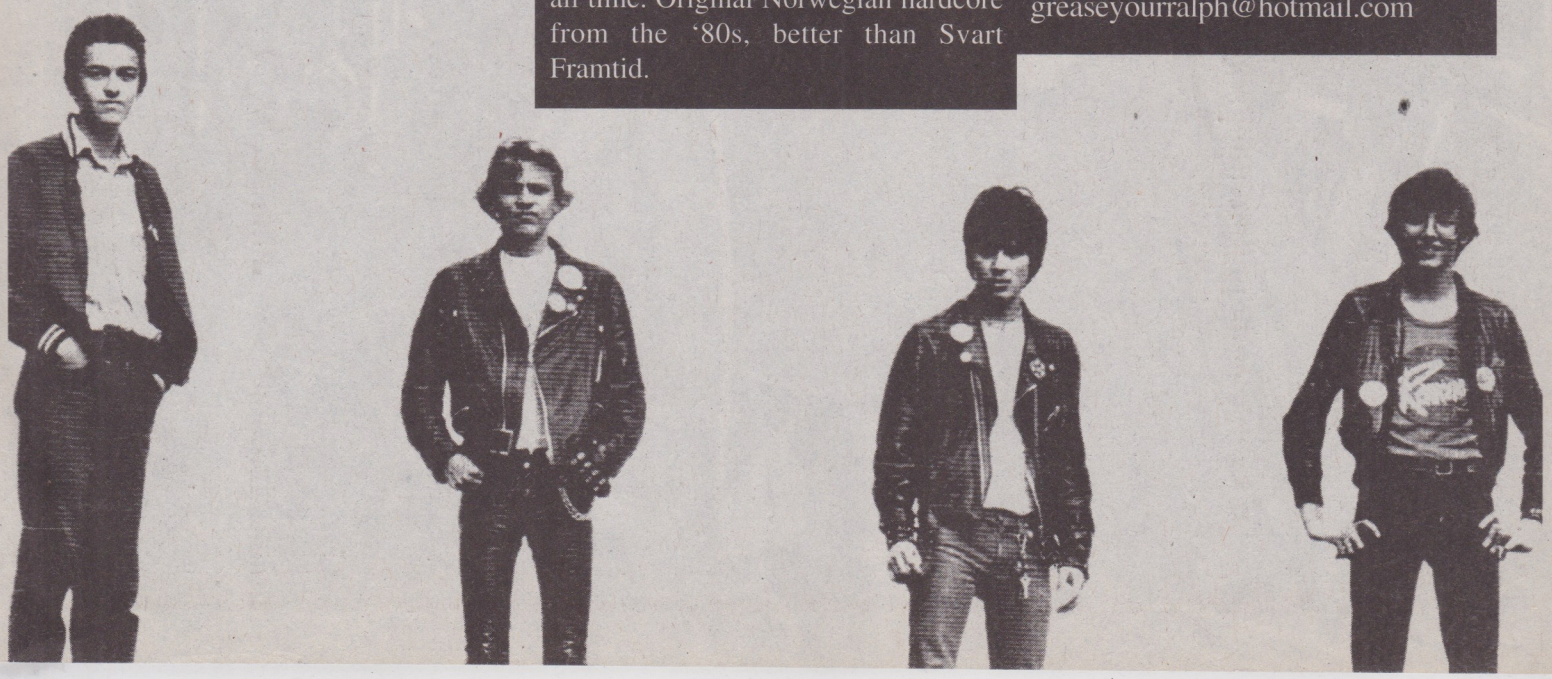

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